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THE BOOK
OF
PERPETUAL ADORATION.



THE BOOK

OF

PERPETUAL ADORATION;

OR

THE LOVE OF JESUS

IN

THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

BY

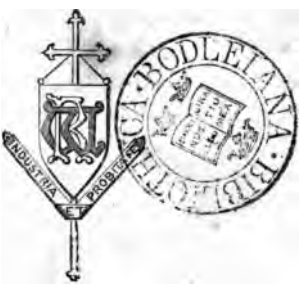
H. M. BOUDON,

DOCTOR IN THEOLOGY, AND ARCHDEACON OF EVREUX.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

EDITED BY THE

REV. J. REDMAN, D.D.



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PREFACE.

HENRI MARIE BOUDON, author of the work of which we here give a new edition, was one of the holiest priests, as well as one of the most skilful directors of souls that adorned the Church of France during the 17th century.

Promoted to the archdeaconry of Evreux at the age of thirty, he at once applied himself zealously to paying annual visits to the parishes confided to his care, to the reforming of abuses, and to the revival of piety. He employed all possible means to procure the salvation of souls, such as sermons, pious books, and other lessons in perfect virtue. Not contented with having inspired the faithful with great zeal for ornamenting the churches, in a book entitled: "*Of the respect due to the sanctity of Churches and of the profanation committed in them*," he strenuously endeavoured to rekindle in all hearts the most lively sentiments of faith and

the most ardent love to the august Sacrament of the Altar.

Supported by many truly christian persons, he established an association at Evreux, for the perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament. It was to inspire the members of that Confraternity with a clear and practical devotion to the adorable Eucharist, that he wrote this little work, to which we give for its first title: "*The Book of Perpetual Adoration.*"

When it was published, this book met with wonderful success, though it was written with great simplicity, and the style was very little studied, on account of the numerous occupations of its author, added to the little importance he attached to worldly eloquence. The work was translated into German, Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Polish, and even into Latin; fifty thousand copies were sold in a very little time, and such great blessings attended it that, eighty thousand persons in the town of Augsburg (in Germany) and the neighbourhood gave in their names to take an hour for the adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament.

If there be one thing that is astonishing after such a success, it is that this work and others from the pen of the holy author, should have been almost entirely forgotten; or, rather, we think we *perceive in this* forgetfulness a sad proof of the

falling off of faith in our age, when even persons who make profession of piety too often seek a pleasing style in devotional books, instead of substantial and practical teaching.

However it may be, we think it a good work to give a new edition of this book, which is now no longer in circulation, but which nevertheless, according to the judgment of a venerable priest, known especially for his prudence and the rectitude of his judgment,* is the most beautiful of all books written in honour of the Most Holy Sacrament.

In this new edition, the style and words of the author have been preserved with religious respect. Only certain passages or parts of sentences have been curtailed, which are no longer in keeping with our customs.

We have only allowed ourselves to substitute the Practice indicated by Boudon, which refers to candidates for the Priesthood (and which in these days would not have the same application to the subject, viz., to present and receive to benefices, such persons only as are proved to be thoroughly worthy of the office) by a little article on spiritual communion, a great part of which we have taken from St. Alphonsus Liguori, (*Visits to the Blessed Sacrament.*)

* M. l'Abbé de Courson, of pious memory, Superior of the *Society* and Seminary of St. Sulpice.

We may say, however, that those who have a holy habit of paying a daily visit to Our Lord Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, can easily find in this little work, subject for reading and meditation for every day in the month. Thus, the general convocation of all the faithful will serve for the first day; the Motives for the eighteen following days, and the nine Practices, with the Conclusion, the Instruction for the Perpetual Adoration and Meditation on the Litanies of the Blessed Sacrament, will complete the thirty-one days. If required, there may be added to them, the hymns and prose of the Church, which are the most perfect compendium of the Catholic faith which that precious belief ought to produce in the hearts of all christians.

May it please our divine Saviour, who is really present, though hidden in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, that this little book, written for His sole glory, may help to excite in the hearts of all who read it, that love of God alone, which burnt in the heart of its pious author, Henri Marie Boudon. He died in 1702, aged 89 years.

DEDICATION.

TO THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD.

GREAT QUEEN OF HEAVEN in whom reigns divine love in the fulness of perfection; holy Mother of fair love, who didst begin to love as soon as thou didst begin to live, and whose chaste and immaculate heart was, from the first moment of thy conception, more inflamed with the fire of divine love than the hearts of even all the Saints in the fulness of their perfection; behold me at thy feet, the feet of my kind Mother, and the sweet sovereign of my heart, to offer thee, as a thing that belongs to thee, this little work, written in honour of the love of thy Divine Son for man, in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Thou knowest, O most divine Virgin, O most sweet Mary, that for a long time past, all my thoughts, all my words, all my actions, and every impulse of my soul are entirely dedicated to the honour and glory of God only; desiring continually to worship in thee and during every moment

of my life, Him who has done such great things. Receive therefore, O most amiable Mary, these thoughts with which it has pleased the God of love to inspire me. May thy maternal heart obtain from thy divine Son, a holy abundance of graces to all those who read this little work, so that their hearts and mine, dying to all love of created beings, may live by God alone, and for God alone. Amen.

GENERAL CONVOCATION

OF ALL THE FAITHFUL TO THE LOVE AND ADORATION OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.

Ignem veni mittere in terra, et quid volo nisi ut accendatur.

SOME of the Holy Fathers, in explaining the Scriptural account of how, at the beginning of the world, the Holy Spirit brooded on the face of the waters, tell us, that He did so, not only to render them productive, but to teach us that that Divine Spirit, who is love itself, by dwelling in a particular manner in created things, endowed them at the same time with divine love, so that all creation, if it be well considered, strongly urges us to love the Divine Goodness. This is what caused St. Bonaventura to say, (in *Stim. div. amor.*) that we were surrounded on every side by the flames of divine love. Is it not therefore most astonishing and

more surprising than we can express, that we find nothing but frozen hearts, and souls insensible to divine truth?

But in order that men should have no excuse for their cold indifference, the Adorable Jesus has come to kindle new fire, by loading us with new graces, particularly in the institution of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, where His love bursts forth to such an excess that our hearts must indeed change their nature, or they must be quite consumed in the furnace of divine love. This is why Our Lord shewed to St. Catherine of Sienna, one of His most faithful lovers, that the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar was a furnace of infinite love: and she plainly saw issue from It such torrents of sacred fire, the pure flames of which spread every where, that she wondered that the hearts of all creatures were not entirely transformed into love for so loving a God. As for me, when I consider what my God does in His presence in the Most Holy Sacrament, when I reflect on the excess of love He has for men, and that I know He is left alone in all the churches of our country parishes, that He is so little known by the greater number of persons who live in them in a state of great ignorance; when I see that He is so little loved, though *He is so* loving, I confess that I cannot understand *it; I feel my* heart and mind fail at sight of the

infinite love of my Sovereign, and I am glad to say it before all men, in accusing myself of my enormous ingratitude, that I must have a heart harder than a rock to be able to live on, instead of dying with love, at beholding in His presence, the inconceivable love of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Weep, you who read these words, shed tears at my insensibility and at the icy coldness of my miserable heart, sigh deeply to see the God of love so little loved!

But, my Lord, what dost Thou? Dost Thou forget, O infinite greatness, Who Thou art, giving Thyself up to my care, leaving the charge of Thy adorable Body and the tabernacle in which Thou dwellest, to a frail creature? O my heart, it is time that thou shouldst once for all be sensible to the love of thy God!

O faithful souls, how sad are the days of our pilgrimage! How painful is it to see so few souls entirely captivated to the reign of the love of Jesus! These reflections have urged me to give you a few motives, accompanied with practices, to inflame you and help you to love my King and yours, in the Most Holy Sacrament. The motives are most powerful if you consider them well, and the practices very holy, though written in a simple, poor style, and the language not very carefully chosen.

You will excuse a man who can know no other science, no other style, no other language, than that of Jesus Christ crucified, and who, in the midst of a multitude of occupations which, through the mercy of God, are the affairs of His Master and His Church, has great difficulty in finding a leisure moment.

His glory only, His interest only, His love only, is sufficient for us. It is this love which I ask of you, it is to this love that I would exhort you; if you have this love, though you possess nothing, you have all; you are therefore very rich. If you have it not, you have nothing, though possessing all things: all consists in loving God, all is vanity which is deprived of that love. The passage we read in Job: *Erat vir simplex et rectus;* "He was a simple and upright man;" is rendered by Saint John Chrysostom and Origen: "*Erat ille homo verus.*" "He was a true man; because," says the learned Origen, "he who does not love God is not a true man, because he ceases to be reasonable; all reason convincing us that we are only made for the honour and love of the Divinity."

We read a very remarkable thing on this subject, in the history of Normandy, where we see that, in former times, men were so strongly persuaded that it was the most shameful thing in the world not to *love God, that* at that time it was a signal affront

and insult to a person to say to him: "You do not love God;" this obliged Prince Richard, who was duke of that province, to make a law, by which he condemned to a fine all persons who made use of this reproach.

Here we have great reason to sigh, when we consider what passes in our days; times have indeed changed their aspect, and are far removed from all resemblance to that more happy period.

After all, the God whom we adore is unchangeable; He is always the same, consequently He is always worthy of the same respect and the same love. Let us therefore, O faithful souls, go all together, to offer Him our prayers and our adoration, let us irrevocably give up our wills to Him, consecrate our hearts to Him, dedicate our love to Him. *Rape ad eum quos potes, et dic eis: Hunc amemus, hunc amemus.*

"Take," says St. Augustine, "and seize all the hearts you can for Him, tell them they must love God, and it is sweet to repeat it: say it, O pastors, to the souls that are under your care; say it, fathers and mothers, to your children; say it, masters, to your servants."

Let us all say to one another: Let us love God, let us love God. *Dic eis ista, ut plorent in convalle ploralionis, et sic eos rape tecum ad* Deum. "Tell

them this," that holy Father goes on to say, "that they may weep and groan in this vale of tears, so that by their tears they may wash out the faults they have committed against the divine love, and henceforth belong only to Him." *State cum eo, et stabitis; requiescite in eo, et quieti eritis. Quo itis in aspera? Quo itis? Bonum quod amatis, ab illo est. Non est requies ubi quærites eam. Quærito quod quæritis; sed ibi non est ubi quæritis.* If you attach yourselves to God by love, you will be unwavering; if you rest in Him, you will find peace. Why do you torment yourselves by wandering amongst creatures? If you seek true happiness, it is He alone who can give it. You will never find it where you are seeking it. Seek it as you will, but it is not to be found where you would seek it. If you really love God, you will find it, for all is given to those who love. Only love God, and all is gained.

We read in the Lives of the Fathers of the Desert that one day, a good anchorite was giving an account of his spiritual exercises to the holy abbot Joseph, and he asked him what he ought to do to walk safely in the way of perfection. The holy old man, standing up, raised his hands to heaven and his fingers shone miraculously, like ten flames of fire. "It is such," replied he, "that you ought to be, to go truly to God; a man all on fire,

totally consumed in the flames of pure love." O faithful souls, that is what I have to say to you. You must be full of the love of God only, and how should it be otherwise, when you meditate on the infinite love of our sweet Saviour in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!

THE BOOK

OF

PERPETUAL ADORATION.

FIRST TREATISE.

FIRST MOTIVE.

JESUS IS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.

Vere Dominus est in loco isto, et ego nesciebam.—Indeed the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.—(Gen. xxviii. 16.)

THESE words of the Patriarch Jacob do not mean that this holy man was ignorant of the truth known even to infidels, that God, by His immensity, fills heaven and earth; but (says the holy Bishop of Geneva, St. Francis of Sales) by these words, "the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not," he means that he did not realize His presence as it deserved.

O Catholic soul! I have no doubt you know that the God of all greatness is hidden under the appearance of bread and wine; that He reposes lovingly in our Ciboriums; and, by an excess of immense mercy, He remains in our Tabernacles. He, *who is* truth, has said it, not by my mouth,

but even by His own; yet, after all, we believe it in such a way, that it would seem as though we believed it not.

One of the fatal effects of sin is to shut the eyes of the sinner's soul to the brightest lights of our holy religion; to throw it into an infinitely deplorable sleep, and to render it insensible to the most touching attractions of holy love. For is it not true that we must be in a strange lethargy, to be so little moved by the real presence of the Great and Eternal God in the Divine Eucharist? Truly, it is inconceivable!

O God of love, how strangely astonished is a soul when, being guided by divine light, she discovers so penetrating a truth in these heavenly rays! The mind is overcome, beholding in this light a mystery surpassing all thought; it loses itself in an abyss of admiration; its life is now nothing but a life of astonishment; and reflecting on the hardened, frozen hearts of men, she would be ever crying out to them: Oh, blindness! Were that soul asked what her thoughts are on such an adorable truth, she would be unable to utter anything but these words: Wonder, wonder, wonder! For she knows that though a creature should speak the language of men and angels, she would not be able to express the goodness of the God of Mercy in choosing to dwell amongst us in the Most Holy Sacrament. It *is this which* so often draws deep sighs from her *heart, as she thinks* of the darkness in which men

are living. It is this which makes her weep inconsolably, knowing that God is so little loved. It is for this, that solitude has such attractions for her, that she may have leisure to sigh over such extreme misery. This produces in the soul an aversion to the world that knows not God, according to the witness of God Himself, and shows, by so many proofs, the world's unhappy state of darkness concerning its Creator, its Saviour, its Chief Good. O Lord! *fulgura coruscationem:* Thou who art the source of all light, send down from the Light inaccessible where Thou dwellest, some bright rays upon the children of men, to open their eyes and awaken them from their deplorable sleep.

It is on this subject, O Catholic soul! that the least of creatures writes these lines, crying out to you with the Apostle: "*Hora est jam nos de somno surgere, nunc enim propior est nostra salus quam cum credidimus.*" It is time, it is time to awake from the sleep in which we were plunged, for our Divine Saviour is much nearer than we think. He is there concealed beneath the species of bread and wine, beholding from thence, as through the sacred lattices (as it is written in the Canticles), what our souls will do for Him. This Lover of souls has said that he who serves Him ought to follow Him, and that His servants ought to be where He is. Behold Him then on our Altars; He is in our Tabernacles; we should choose His Sacred Feet as our *abode;* there we must go with all possible

fervour, to offer Him our prayers and adoration, and the sacrifice of our hearts; moaning, weeping and broken-hearted with loving contrition, at the little care we have hitherto taken to come and pay our respects to Him who is our All. It will be very difficult not to be more faithful to Him, if once our eyes are opened to His Divine Sight, and after awaking from our tepidity, we shall say with Jacob: *Vere Dominus est in loco isto, et ego nesciebam.* Alas! have we ever realised it?

SECOND MOTIVE.

JESUS IS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT IN ALL HIS GREATNESS.

Sanctuarium meum metuite.—Reverence my Sanctuary.—(Leviticus, xix. 30.)

It is true that the majesty of kings, princes and earthly sovereigns, the brilliancy and pomp of courts, attract people and draw large crowds after them. At sight of this, I cannot help exclaiming: O children of men, how long will ye be slow of heart, seeking the vain delusions of the world that, in its inconstancy, are never to be really possessed, and so soon escape from your hands, whilst you are so careless of possessing Him who alone can give you happiness? Behold the King of Kings, before whom a thousand worlds are but a speck; in whose presence the pomp of earthly kings vanishes like a shadow, and is simply nothing; behold Him before whom the foundations of heaven tremble, and He left alone in our Churches!

Alas! hardly a single person is to be seen in His Sanctuary! If it be splendour that attracts you, know that the Sacred Body of my adorable Master present in the Most Holy Sacrament, has in itself more light than all the bodies of the Blessed Saints together will ever have in the realms of glory, where they all will shine like suns; the brightness of His Divine Body, brighter than all these, reflects upon them immense greatness, and unutterable excellence.

Know also, that the Holy Soul of this Precious Body unites in Itself the wonder of Paradise, the love, the joy, and consolation of all the blessed inhabitants of heaven; know, that the Word, the Living Image of the Father of Light, is there, the God of all Greatness before whom all other greatness is nothingness. *Venite adoremus;* Come, then, and adore the infinite majesty of the Lord of all things, and remember these words that He addresses to us by the mouth of His servant Moses, *Sanctuarium meum metuite.* Let men tremble with holy fear when they enter the place where He is in all His greatness.

THIRD MOTIVE.

JESUS IS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT FOR EVER.

Ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem sæculi.—Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.—(Matt. xxviii. 20.)

"BEHOLD, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world," are the words of our

Divine Saviour. Inestimable favour, incomparable happiness, excessive goodness, unheard-of mercy! It has been the astonishment of the Saints, that God, in His goodness, remembers man. *Domine, quid est homo quod memor es ejus?*

But what will man say when he knows that not only the God of all greatness will remember him in the multitude of His mercies, but that He has even determined to dwell with His creatures until the consummation of the world?

How is it that we are not lost in an abyss of admiration, when we consider that the Creator of the world, having appeared on our earth, the world has not known Him? Who is able to conceive that the creature would not receive his Creator, who came down from heaven to visit him according to His great mercy? But that is not all. The creature crucified Him, caused Him to die an ignominious death, after making Him suffer all possible torments, by cruelly tearing His Virginal Flesh and bruising It with deep wounds. And after all this shameful treatment, He not only comes to visit us again, but He takes the means of dwelling with us until the end of time.

If the Seraphim are not enraptured at such a sight, I know not what can enrapture them. But what will *men* say? What will *they* do after such an excess of love? Alas! the greater part of them will think *but little* about it, and be but little moved by it. *Surely, our hearts* are harder than rock and more

insensible than stone. Hear what that great lover of the Son of God, the holy Saint Theresa, said,—her heart touched at His miraculous goodness. All transported at such ravishing love, she spoke of it to heaven, she spoke of it to the earth, she spoke of it to men and to the angels, she spoke of it to God, sending forth her sighs to Him, that He, the God of love, was so little loved. In the midst of these heavenly transports, she prayed to the Eternal Father to have pity on His well-beloved Son. "O Sovereign Greatness, this Divine Saviour is so consumed with love for men, by whom He has been so cruelly treated, that unless Thou dost prevent it, He will subject Himself to fresh sufferings and further humiliations." She called her sisters to help her, to unite with her in prayer, that the loving Jesus might be no more treated so shamefully and with so much harshness by men.

I address myself to you who read these pages: I ask you what your heart says, and what you think on such excessive love of God? What are your resolutions, or, rather, what resolutions will you make? I know well what you *ought* to do; but I ask your heart what it *will* do?

The God of Love has remained on our Altars many ages for love of you, how much time have you passed in His Divine Presence for love of Him? Alas! sigh deeply when you think of this; be heart-broken with sorrow, and with loving contrition.

Reflect also that this same God, with infinite love, will be with men until the consummation of the world; try your heart as to the inclination it has to keep Him company: how many hours will you devote to Him to prove your love, and to offer your adoration to Him?

FOURTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IS UNCEASINGLY IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Ecce tabernaculum Dei cum hominibus.—Behold the Tabernacle of God with men.—(Apoc. xxi. 3.)

Oh! the immense love of God whom we adore! It is not sufficient for Him to have visited men during the days of His visible converse with them, or to appear only occasionally on our Altars, in the midst of the most august of our mysteries! That would suffice for the accomplishment of the promise He has made, to be with us to the end of time; but His love will not allow Him to separate Himself from us for a moment. He is in our churches all the day long; He is there all the night, at every hour and every moment. Praise the Lord, for He is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

O Christian souls, acknowledge that the mercies of the God of our hearts are admirable; sing eternal hymns to Him for such unspeakable goodness. Let all who fear the Lord approach Him and say: *Quam bonus Israel Deus!* How good is God to *Israel, how* tender are His mercies! Behold, the

Eternal Father has sanctified His House. *Et erunt oculi mei et cor meum ibi cunctis diebus.* (III Reg. ix.) He has placed there both His Eyes. and His Heart, not in a passing manner, but for ever, without any exception of time.

O my God, permit my frail soul to ask Thee how it is that Thou remainest in our Tabernacles not only during the day, but also all the night long? I see that Thou wilt find a few adorers in the day, a few persons who will keep Thee company: but when I think that Thou art all alone in Thy Churches every night, I am overwhelmed, I know not what to do. When I reflect that our Churches are closed in the evening because men leave them, and that Thy love makes Thee remain there, O my Lord, I ask Thee, why dost not Thou then, at least, leave these dwellings that Thou hast so divinely established with men, since there are none with whom Thou canst dwell? But love has made Thee our prisoner. O children of men! the excessive love that the Great and Eternal God has for you, has made Him a captive, has made Him a slave. O heavens! your Sovereign is detained, locked up in a little Tabernacle; His love holds Him chained beneath the fragile species. Truly, the sight of so astonishing and excessive a love, is a most urgent motive, obliging us to visit the Church frequently, to remain there as long as we can, never to leave it without regret, and to leave our hearts at the foot of the Ciborium, when we

are obliged to quit Him who should be our only joy; and during our occupations, and conversation with creatures, even during the night, when we are wakeful, we should think of our loving Jesus, who dwells constantly in the Divine Eucharist, in order to attract our thoughts, so that we may lovingly regret our inability to be, both in body and mind, in that place where He dwells in Body, Soul and Divinity. Oh! how ought we to exclaim with the Psalmist: Here is my rest for ever and ever: this is the place I have chosen, because my Saviour has chosen it. O my soul, let others do as they will, but I feel that this place must be our sweetest and constant retreat.

FIFTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT IN ALL COUNTRIES.

Nec est alia natio tam grandis, quæ habeat deos appropinquantes sibi, sicut Deus noster adest cunctis obsecrationibus nostris.—Neither is there any other nation so great, that hath gods so nigh them, as our God is present to all our petitions.—(Deut. iv. 7.)

No; there is no nation so happy as the Christian people in the ease with which their God may be approached. In times past, under the ancient Law, there was only one temple for all the earth; there was only one Sanctuary, into which the High Priest alone, was permitted to enter; and *even* he was obliged, out of respect, to fill the *sacred place with* the smoke of incense, so that

nothing could be seen. In our days, not only does the God of infinite greatness dwell in a Temple by the effects of His grace, but He dwells bodily in as many places as there are Churches and Altars throughout the world.

Under the old Law, it was not only not permitted to touch the Ark, but even to look at it too closely. The Bethsamites were punished for having looked on it with too much curiosity. Now, we may, and we are even commanded, not merely to touch, but to eat Him of whom the Ark was only the shadow. We may truly say that we have no faith; that having eyes, we see not, and that having ears, we hear not.

People make pilgrimages into foreign lands to honour God in the relics of His Saints, and it is well; but at the same time, they will hardly take a hundred steps to go and pay their respects to the adorable Body of the God of Majesty!

We may say still more; that the excess of God's love causes our excessive coldness and insensibility, by our abuse of His grace. Is it possible that, if God had not loved us so much, we should love Him more? Learn this terrible truth from what we see. Is it not true that, if the loving Jesus had established the presence of His Divine Body in only one spot on earth, all nations would have hastened to come from every part of the world to offer Him, in the Adorable Sacrament, their adoration and prayers? On arriving at the place, they

would no doubt be overwhelmed in the Presence of the Wonderful Mysteries, and would be seized with holy fear on considering their greatness; they would offer every possible respect from astonishment and love; but because God, in His infinite goodness, has established His presence, not only in one spot, but in every province, and town, and place where there is a Church, and even in the poorest villages, therefore people do not take the trouble to visit Him, and His love is rejected. He is at our doors—He is waiting for us night and day; and yet, through an incomprehensible neglect, this Divine Lover of men is abandoned by His creatures. He is in our poor little country churches alone all the week, so that the poor have not far to go to find Him on Sundays and Feasts. Oh, how foolish we are! Will our hearts always be insensible to the attractions of Divine Love?

We envy the happiness of the Magi, who came with great difficulty and trouble from afar, to adore the Divine Saviour of our souls. We have not, like them, to leave our kingdoms; it is not necessary for us to make long journeys; what, then, do we do, to pay our respects to our Master, in the Most Holy Sacrament?

When our Blessed Lord preached to the multitude it was very difficult to approach Him, so great was the throng around Him; those poor people were zealous; they, who did not know Him as we do, *made openings in* the roofs of houses to let down

their sick, to place them before Him who so mercifully came to heal all our diseases. The doors of our Churches are open, and the Children of Zion weep because they are deserted, and hardly any one is seen there.

Lastly, it must be said that even the Blessed Virgin herself could not always have the access she desired to the most loving Son that ever was, for the Holy Gospel informs us she could not sometimes approach Him, whilst we worms of the earth have all possible liberty to draw near to Him, to speak to Him, and remain in His Divine Presence; and yet we will not make a holy use of such a precious favour!

SIXTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT FOR EVERY ONE.

Venite ad me, omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis, et ego reficiam vos.—Come to me, all you that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.—(Matt. xi. 28.)

COME unto Me, says the loving Jesus, all who are in trouble and are heavily burdened, and I will comfort you. These tender words, which the Loving Heart of the charitable Saviour of our souls has expressed, are addressed to every one. He is, in the Most Holy Sacrament, for the poor as well as for the rich. He gives Himself equally to the learned and ignorant, to the great and small, to monarchs and their subjects, to the lowest on earth as well as

to those seated on thrones. The Bread of Angels, says the Church, is become the Bread of men! O wonder! O miracle! The Lord of all things has given himself as food to the poor, to the slave, to the most abject persons in the world. Jesus, the Sovereign of the Universe, has no guards to keep off those who wish to approach His Divine Person; all the avenues of the palaces of the God of Heaven are freely opened; it costs nothing, no money is needed to have the honour of speaking to Him. Ineffable consolation! Christian souls being so easily able to enjoy the Presence of Him, who makes the felicity of the Blessed, already partake, in some degree, of the joys of a blissful eternity. They find Paradise out of Paradise; earth is changed into heaven, and men have no great reason to envy the angels their happiness, seeing they possess Him who makes the height of angelic bliss.

Would to God that all the poor, all the afflicted, all those who are persecuted and forsaken, all who are held in contempt and who have had losses, would listen to these truths, and would remember the words of the Apostle:—*Quomodo non cum illo omnia nobis donavit!* That the Eternal Father, in giving us his well-beloved Son, has given us all things.

Jesus is ours in the most Holy Sacrament; He belongs to all who will receive Him; but Jesus is *God, therefore He is* the Great and Supreme Good.

Can there be anything wanting to Him who is in possession of this Infinite Treasure? O afflicted souls, be comforted! He who satisfies all hearts, who fulfils all desires, is yours! Rejoice, ye poor, for ye are very rich, you can enjoy Immense Good; while the great and rich ones of the world reject you, and turn you from their houses and their society, and will not listen to you, the Great King of Angels gives you an audience as often as you desire it. He is pleased to hear you, and He likes your conversation when it comes from the heart; He fills you with His graces, He caresses you with His most precious favours, and places you in the rank, and amongst the number of His dearest favourites. *Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit inanes.* He has loaded the needy with His gifts, while He sends away the rich, who are full of this world's goods, but deprived of His favours.

SEVENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IS VERY HUMBLE IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Discite a me quia mitis sum, et humilis corde.—Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart.—(Matt. xi. 29.)

O MY soul! we must here exclaim with the Prophet that the works of thy God, His designs and His thoughts, are impenetrable to all human understanding. We cannot contemplate them seriously without being overcome with love; for, when we

reflect on the God of Paradise with all His Infinite Greatness fixing His dwelling amongst men, until the consummation of the world, for love of them, does it not seem that nothing more could be expected from His Infinite Love?

But when we think, when we know, that this ever Adorable Being, hiding all His greatness, bears extreme humiliations in the Divine Eucharist, can we find words, or even thoughts, on a subject which will be the astonishment of all eternity?

Jesus Christ, says the Apostle, emptied Himself in becoming man; the holy writer could not use stronger terms to tell us something of the Humility of the Son of the Eternal Father. But where shall we find words able in any way to express the inconceivable abasement of the same God of Majesty in the Most Holy Sacrament? *Ecce puerum dedi te gentibus; contemptibilis tu es valde*, says the Scripture. We must confess that the Eternal Child is in a state of great humiliation; but at His birth angels poured forth celestial music, while in the Divine Eucharist all is silence. He dwells in Egypt as an exile, but at His arrival every idol fell to the ground. He is despised by the Pharisees in His Public Life, but He raises the dead, and six or seven thousand persons follow Him to make Him their King.

If He is abject on Calvary by His Death, He is glorious by the marvels that are accomplished; the *rocks are* rent, the sun is darkened, the graves are *opened; but in* the Blessed Sacrament, His humi-

liation is carried to excess; the senses there perceive nothing. Here, my God, who is the God of Glory, is clothed only in the fragile species of bread and wine! He might, at least, have appeared only a child, as He did in the manger, or a man, as He did on Calvary; but no, we perceive only the appearance of bread. O my soul! let us remember that this is the study of pure Love, the Divine school where we must learn to walk in the holy paths of Christianity, into which we have been called and brought by such special grace.

After this abasement of our Blessed Lord, if humility has ever seemed difficult to us, ought not vanity now to be placed among things that are impossible? O dust, O ashes, what sayest thou to such startling truths? It would be good for us here to place before our eyes those questions in which our pride suffers; is there a heart to be found that still refuses to submit to the greatest humiliation possible, at the sight of the surprising abjection of its God?

The Great All reduces Himself below that which is nothing; where then shall nothingness place itself? It often happens that, when there are numerous communicants, imperceptible fragments of the Sacred Host fall to the ground, so that, in a certain manner, the God of Paradise is in the dust, at our feet. Strange Spectacle for the eyes of the holy Angels who, seeing their Sovereign brought so low, behold, at the same time, nothing but

insolence in the greater number of those who are in our Churches. Pride reigns in their minds, in their intentions, in their posture, in their dress; pride so excessive, that it often leads these followers of This Humbled God, to dispute precedence in His Presence, to dispute their places, and the vain honours of this world, which is so deceitful and so miserably deceived. This seems inconceivable, but alas! it is seen every day.

I say, therefore, that it will be difficult to find a perfect Christian, and thus it is that the God of Christians is humbled; we hear and we see people who call themselves Christians, but who live and speak like infidels. These wretched white-washed Christians say: Why should I yield? Why do you ask me to humble myself to a person who is my inferior? O words, O thoughts, O designs that deserve to be held in execration by all the faithful! O my soul, my resolution is made,—you must yield to every creature, you must humble yourself beneath all men, whoever they are. We must always think ourselves below every one else, look upon ourselves as the last in the world: after the humiliation of our Master in the Most Holy Sacrament, all our honour ought to be to bear every possible abjection. We must make humiliation this point of honour, and the contempt of others ought to be a subject for our glory. A soul that is a *little enlightened* on the humility of Jesus in the *Most Holy* Sacrament, is capable of practising all

kinds of humiliations. O my God, my Sovereign! alas, how is it possible for any one who knows Thee, to act in any other way? The world does not understand these practices: but the world knows not God!

EIGHTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IS VERY POOR IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Pauper sum ego.—I am poor.—(Psalm lxxxvii. 16.)

THAT voice, O my soul, which thou hearest, is the voice of the Holy Spirit. This ought to remove all doubt from our minds; it ought fully to convince us of an inconceivable but very certain truth, which the Divine Spirit teaches us by the mouth of the Royal Prophet, who, speaking in the person of our Blessed Lord, assures us that He is poor; *Pauper sum ego.* Let us admire this striking truth in the Divine Eucharist, where He, who is the Lord of all things, is exceeding poor, and in many places scarcely possesses a Church wherein to repose. Thou knowest, O Eternal Greatness! Thou knowest, O Worthy King of Paradise! how often we have found only Ciboriums of pewter, poor Tabernacles draped with a little piece of the most common stuff, and Chalices so mean, into which Thy Precious Blood is received, that it was painful to see them. A person only in moderate circumstances, would be ashamed to use such a *cup* at table, and we hear it said that there

are not sufficient means to help the adorable Jesus in the extreme poverty to which He has reduced Himself, by His own Will and through His boundless Love; yet the rich people of the world are served with silver and other precious things.

Again, the greater number of our poor people in the country have clean and neat linen; it is only Thou, O my dear Lord and my God, who art reduced to such poverty. Ah! my heart, what ought we to think of this? If we were not so hard-hearted, we should weep tears of blood, we should cry out incessantly against this behaviour of creatures towards their Creator.

I confess and declare, in the sight of heaven and earth, that my heart must be hardness itself, not to be consumed with love at the sight of this precious love of God. A good and noble heart that loved its Master could no longer exist, it would speedily die of love and sorrow at seeing so loving and so generous a God so little loved, in spite of all His favours.

Truly, truly, this mystery of Love is fearful, and what account shall we have to give of it on the day we are judged? O rich! O poor! I have only one word to say to you. Ye rich ones, weep and howl in the midst of your riches, according to the words of Holy Scripture: be confounded with shame at the sight of a God so poor! Ye poor, be consoled; be full of holy joy at being like unto your Saviour! *Let every* Christian admit that poverty must be good, *because it is so* tenderly loved by the God of Love.

NINTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IS VERY OBEDIENT IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Ego autem non contradico.—I do not resist. (Isaias l. 5.)

LET man rebel against God, let creatures renounce the dependence they owe their Creator, let them disobey His commandments, but Jesus, for love of them, will obey all and put Himself into the power of men without resistance. As soon as the Priest has said four words, behold! He leaves the bosom of His Father, yet without departing from Him, to put Himself into the hands of His Priest; placing Himself under his control without limit of time or place; for it is not God who fixes the hour to the Priest, but He comes at the time named by him with such an extraordinary punctuality, that He has never once missed doing so for ages.

The Scripture teaches us that He was obedient to the Most Holy Virgin and to her virginal Spouse, Saint Joseph; this rejoices all holy souls and overcomes them with Divine Love. But here are other marvels in the Most Blessed Sacrament; He obeys as many Priests as there are in the world, as many as there have been since the Law of Grace, and as many as there will be until the end of the world. When He is beneath the consecrated sacramental species, He faithfully remains there without ever being *weary*: He allows His Priests to carry Him

whither they will, from Altar to Altar, to the houses of the sick, in procession in the streets: *Ego autem non contradico.* He does this with such great obedience, that He never resists man; He gives Himself up absolutely into the hands of His frail creature. *Obediente Deo voci hominis,* is written in the old Law. God therefore obeys man through love: and will not love make man obey God?

We must here meditate at leisure on the causes which lead us to disobey God's commands, so that we may make great and efficacious resolutions to follow the rules, Divine Goodness has prescribed for us; but we must consider well what we have just said, that our resolutions may be stronger. If these truths are well weighed, we shall have no more difficulty in obeying, not God only, but also, for the love of Him, all creatures to whom He has given authority over us.

TENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS LEAVES ALL IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Ego autem sum vermis, et non homo: opprobrium hominum et abjectio plebis.—I am a worm, and no man: the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people.—(Psalm xxi. 7.)

As Jesus is in the Most Holy Sacrament, He is there in His Divine Nature, and consequently with all possible greatness; but His Glory, infinite as it is, *is so entirely* concealed, that if one were to judge *from appearances,* it seems as if there were nothing

present but a mean piece of bread! *Vere tu es Deus absconditus.* Verily, we must confess, now or never, that the God whom we adore is a Hidden God, as He divests Himself of all marks of His Godhead.

He is all-powerful, but under the sacramental species, He is all-weak; it is He who gives motion to all things, but here He does not move. He is the Uncreated Word, the Eternal Word, and He utters not a word. We may even be guilty of insolence in His Divine Presence, by our discourses and postures, or by evil glances, yet He seems not to perceive it. O my God, to what has love reduced Thee? We might even say that He has made Himself like unto those idols of which the Psalmist says, they have eyes and see not, they have ears and hear not, they have hands and handle not.

There is no sign of life discernible in the Consecrated Host, and to the senses there is no difference between one that is consecrated and another which is not. If, in the manger, God's love is bound by the swathing bands that are wrapped round Him, He is still at liberty to sigh; whilst on the Cross, He speaks and has the use of His Sacred Eyes, but this is not the case in the Divine Eucharist. If, at least, He appeared in It under the semblance of an Angel, or some other noble creature, He would obtain the reverence of men; but He is united, not to an intellectual creature, not to a substance, but to the appearance of a crumb of bread and a drop of wine. He

places Himself at times in so small a fragment of the Sacred Host, that it is scarcely perceptible to the eye of His creatures. Behold Him then, apparently stripped of all the greatness of His Divinity! No Human Person is found there, the Sacred Humanity subsisting only in the Divine Person. It is love makes Him leave all things. The Great All leaves everything for nothingness.

After that, shall we miserable beings, in our nothingness, have the courage to reserve anything to ourselves?

Earth has nothing really great; but, even if it were full of earthly grandeurs, we ought justly to despise them in comparison with our dear Lord. O, how rare is it to find a heart that truly loves this Divine Lover of men! If it be natural in real love to leave all for the loved one, it must be said that there are few who love, because there are few who know how to leave creatures for love of Jesus.

Some are attached to gold and silver, others to the pleasures of the senses; some are kept from loving God by the esteem they have for the world, and what people will say of them; others by the love of some frail creature. You will see some who cannot overcome the love they have for their body; men who cannot give up good cheer, delicate dishes, delicious wines; women who pass great part of their lives in dressing, talking about dress and *their* head-gear. O God! what conversation for *people who hope* to live in eternity!

There are some who are caught in more wily traps; people who pride themselves on a brilliant intellect, who use every effort to have elevated and sublime thoughts, make eloquent speeches and polite discourse; people who make a show of their knowledge, and try to make themselves great in the eyes of the world by their wisdom. There are, it is true, many who have detached themselves from all these things and yet are bound by ties more subtle, but which also will not fail to detain them captive, if they do not sever and destroy them. Such are those who think much of gratifying their taste in spiritual matters, who rest their affections on inspirations and a tender and sensible devotion; who are much attached to particular exercises of piety and to certain means which, though very good and excellent, ought not to fetter the soul. In this class we may count inordinate regard for directors and spiritual friends, for certain books and a number of little objects of devotion; it is to God alone, without reserve, that we should attach ourselves, and not to those things which are only means for leading us to Him.

Think you, who read these truths, what keeps you back, what hinders you; remember that love for you has made the God of Love leave all, therefore there is nothing which you ought not to give up for Him, whether it be a father or mother, child, friend, honour, friendship—I say more—even yourself. You can have no excuse for not leaving them

and giving up your attachment to them, when you meditate on the Most Holy Sacrament. See, therefore, what you will do. Look at what God has done for you; look at what you have done, and what you are going to do for Him; think of what you are and what God is; think of what, at the Day of Judgment, you would wish, for His sake, to have given up. That is what you must now forsake. Are you doing so, do you intend to do so? Those creatures, those worldly goods, those honours, that self, which keep you so attached to them—what will become of all these at the hour of your death? What will become of that world that you care so much about—those conversations in society, your beauty, your wit, the love of creatures?

Alas, how odious all these vanities will then seem to you! They will pass for ever with the world that you must leave for ever.

Ah, how much sweeter that Divine Love rather than the inevitable necessity of death should detach us from ourselves and the world! I say to you once more—and I repeat it—think well of this, consider carefully all the hidden thoughts of your heart, and put from it all that is not good, all that does not tend to pure love, all that tends to the love of creatures. I know not what you will do, but I know well what you ought to do, and I know also that, if you do it not, all is lost for you, and *you will lose* yourself; therefore, with all the love *of my heart, I cry* out to you—Is it possible that

my Beloved finds so little love in the hearts of you His creatures?

Ah, my Sovereign Lord, it seems to me Thy love is so strong that I believe and cannot doubt that a soul who loves Thee, though it should possess all the goods, all the honours, and all the pleasures of the whole world—though it should possess the dominion of the Universe, would look upon them as nothing to have Thy love; would trample on crowns and sceptres; would burn a thousand worlds in sacrifice to the greatness of Thy love.

Such a soul has no attachment to bind her, no designs or wishes, holy though they may be, to occupy her heart; her regret is, not at leaving self or creatures; if she sighs, if she weeps, it is because she has nothing but herself to give as a sacrifice to love; she would possess all to give all, and she is melted to tears because, though all created beings belonged to her, they would be nothing to offer to her Beloved. Compare yourself with those souls who love, and judge of your own state. Do you truly love God?

ELEVENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS DOES ALL THINGS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Omnia operatur.—All these things [one and the same spirit] worketh.—(1 Cor. xii. 11.)

ST. PAUL, that man who was instructed in Paradise itself, that great Apostle, says, in speaking of his

dear Master, that it is He who works all good in us; that it is through His mercy that we are what we are. For this reason He has established Sacraments in His Church as so many channels of grace. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist is found, not grace only, but the Author of all gifts who, through incomparable charity, wishing to assist us in all our wants, does in It all things for us.

He is our Divine and Mighty King, who defends us against those enemies who attack us incessantly with so much fury, so much strength and cunning, in the hope of causing our eternal ruin. *Parasti in conspectu meo mensam adversus omnes qui tribulant me.*

It is There that the soul must go for support in her weakness, and find strength to prevent her falling in her combats. If the Lord is with the soul, she has nothing to fear; though she should walk in the Shadow of Death she will be in a Happy Path, sustained by the Right Hand of her Master and God. Jesus in the Divine Eucharist fulfils the office of a kind Father, carefully watching over all our necessities in a way we may well adore, but cannot explain:—*Dominus regit me, et nihil mihi deerit.* Nothing can be wanting to the soul that has entirely given herself up to Divine Providence; if we do not feel sufficient help, it is because we lean too much on creatures.

Happy, a thousand times happy, is the soul that *has put all* her confidence in the Lord of all things; *she will find in* Him, not only the love of a kind

Father, but all the tenderness of a Maternal heart. Yes, says our infinitely loving Lord, though a mother should be unnatural enough to forsake her child, I will never forget thee, O my people! And He has indeed well proved it, in feeding us with His flesh and giving us His Blood to drink. After such love, what may we not well expect from so merciful a God? Why should we be anxious, or grieve ourselves about our salvation or temporal affairs? If we will give ourselves up to Him and the attractions of His Love, Paradise is ours; even in this life we shall succeed in everything, although we are often not aware of it, for we consider mental anxiety, poverty, contempt, and being forsaken by creatures, as misfortune and misery, whilst in reality they conduce to our eternal salvation.

Jesus, in the Divine Eucharist, fulfils the office of Judge, to hear our complaints; but it ought to be the sweetest consolation to us that He is, at the same time, our Advocate. Therefore it is to His Sacred Feet that we should often go and expose the difficulties of the great affair that we have before us, which in reality is the only important affair, that of our salvation. Oh, the insensibility of human hearts! There is nothing people will not do for a worldly, insignificant lawsuit; they consult the most skilful lawyers, they boast of the favour of judges, they make use of the credit of their friends, but for the affair of Eternity, they will scarcely take one step. If they speak to the Adorable Jesus, it

is in such a cold way, that it is very evident how little they are moved; the reason is, that they do not believe; how rare is it to meet with one who has faith!

Jesus, in the Divine Eucharist, fulfils the office of Physician; the Divine Nourishment that He gives in It, is a certain remedy for all our ills. It delivers us from all our languor, It cures all our diseases, It preserves us from all those infirmities into which we are liable to fall.

Finally, Jesus, in this Divine Sacrament, is like a Sacred Lover, to whom we can tell all our griefs, our affairs, and all our wants, whenever we like and as long as we like. How sweet it is, when we have some trouble on our mind, to do what the humble St. Francis of Assisi did! He did not waste his time in speaking of it to creatures, but he used to go and throw himself at the Feet of his Saviour, and there pour out the grief of his heart to Him; then he came away greatly consoled and happy. What makes us so unhappy in our troubles is, that we go and seek for consolation where it is not to be found.

See, now, what God does for your salvation: He forgets nothing. He places Himself in every kind of condition: He exercises all offices; certainly this ought to make you reflect that salvation is an affair of much greater consequence than you think.

TWELFTH MOTIVE.

JESUS SUFFERS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Charitas omnia suffert.—Charity beareth all things.—(1 Cor. xiii. 4, 7.)

COME, my soul, we are losing ourselves deeper and deeper in the immense abyss of the love of our God. Ye loving Seraphim, be with us, as favourable guides to the brightness of the sacred fire which so holily consumes you. O Seraphic Spirits, keep us in the paths of love by the ardour of the heavenly flame which burns in you! Look upon this wonderful spectacle, at which mortals are so little astonished. Purify our hearts to make them susceptible of the keenest impressions of the love which bursts forth so miraculously. Animate our courage to heavenly aspirations, so that we may make no resolutions except the most generous with which love can possibly inspire us; for behold, the Great King Jesus, before Whom the entire Universe is but a speck, has so given Himself up to the love of men, in the Most Holy Sacrament, that, not content with leaving all things to dwell there, and working in It a prodigy which has never had any parallel, He who is impassible, He who dwells amidst infinite glory, and Who is the object of the adoration and respect of the Heavenly Powers, He there suffers all things, He there endures all things. He suffers there from blaspheming infidels, who do not know Him; He suffers from heretics, who deny His Presence. Strange insult

to the Heart, the most loving of all hearts, not only in not acknowledging Its love, but even in denying It, which is, of all things in the world, the most keenly felt by one who loves much.

But who can tell what He endures there from Catholics; the offences and ingratitude of those who acknowledge Him in the Divine Eucharist? For if we go into our Churches, they are either empty, forsaken places, or if they are crowded with people, one may observe the greater extreme ingratitude of hearts. How much insolence, how much irreverence, how much immodesty in keeping up conversation there; what gestures and acts of disrespect!

If, however, one could fathom the depth of souls, which are well known to Him from whom nothing is hidden, what monstrous and diabolical things would be seen! How many minds wandering every where with voluntary distractions, while their bodies are in the House of God. How many lips that impudently lie to the Lord, that are offering their prayers to Him, that say they will serve Him, whilst their hearts breathe only the love of the world, the sworn enemy of Jesus; whilst their imaginations are full of impure, wicked thoughts, in the Presence of the King of Virgins, and the most faithful friend of purity. Designs of vengeance, feelings of hatred and aversion, before Him, who is the God of Love, and who wills that we love *each other as* He has loved us. Movements of

pride and vanity, whilst the God of all Glory is in an infinitely humbled state.

Nor is this all; the sufferings which love entails upon our Sovereign do not end here. And now, O my heart, unless thou art harder than the nether millstone, thou wilt surely break for very grief. For many there are, who, daring to do that which must make the very foundations of heaven tremble, receive the Body of the God of heaven and earth whilst in a state of mortal sin; sometimes because they are guilty of sins for which they feel no real contrition, sometimes because their resolutions for the future are not sufficiently strong; for they ought to be such as to make them ready to give up every thing—wealth, power, honour—all we hold most precious—rather than commit one mortal sin, or even stand in the occasion of sin.

Alas! how rare are these resolutions in the world! Nor is it so easy to make them as many, deceiving their own selves, imagine, and thus give to Jesus Christ a dwelling with Satan. What a fearful crime! What a terrible sacrilege! We read of, and alas! our world has seen, abominable outrages offered to the Person of King Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament. That Adorable Body which, after the Vision of God, makes the delight of the Blessed, has been trodden under foot, has been struck with blows of a hammer, has been thrown away to the winds. These things cause us fear, and with great reason; but the sinner who receives

the Sacred Body of our Lord, whilst in a state of mortal sin and into a heart where the devil dwells, compels Our Lord to dwell with the demon, and in a place of which that demon is lord. What will become of the sinner at the sight of so terrible a truth?

Alas! What have we come to? The Jews who knew not the God of glory, nailed Him, in their ignorance, to the tree: for, as St. Augustine says, had they known Him, they would not have crucified Him. And we, who weep over His Passion, who cry out against His judges, who are keen in our resentment against His executioners, we are guilty of the same crimes, with this difference, that while their sins were committed in ignorance, ours are with knowledge and utmost impiety.

I call upon you, then, O Catholic soul, to meditate not only on the Passion which the Son of God endured so many ages ago in Judea, but also on that to which bad Catholics in all places daily subject Him, all impassible though He be, in the Most Holy Sacrament. Do not, then, I beseech you, proceed further without pausing to examine yourself on so deplorable a subject; are you not guilty of these infidelities of which we have been speaking? Read them over again; question yourself on all these points, whether it be irreverence in church, whether it be what is passing in your mind, or whether it be bad communions that you may *have made.*

Are you not, or have you not been, of the number of these wretched beings? If you are, learn from St. John Chrysostom, and from other Fathers, that you are worse than Judas, harder than Pilate, more cruel than the Jews who crucified the Son of God. O horror of horrors! O crime worthier of demons than of men! But I ask you, have you ever well thought of it? Do you know that you have been another Judas, and a hundred times worse than Judas? But what says your heart now? Has it done with sin? Does it bid an eternal farewell to the vanities, to the impurities, to the iniquities that reign in the world? What resolution have you made? Is it not sufficient for you to have been guilty of the death of a God? Are you not satisfied with the anguish you have made Him suffer? Would you still add pain to His pain, grief to His grief, crosses to His Cross? Do not deceive yourself; all this you will do if you neglect to set your conscience in order.

And even though you have put an end to your sins, yet reflect for a little while on the past; think how many times you have crucified the Son of God; for it is a truth, taught us by the Holy Spirit, that they who sin mortally, crucify Him afresh — *Rursus crucifigentes.* Let your tears flow then, let them flow for the rest of your life, like water from a source that never dries up; moan, sigh, and cry out in the excess of your grief; tell it to the Angels, tell it to men, lament

every moment, for the rest of your days, your exceeding wickedness and crimes, and detest them with horror. Remember that it was for you He reduced Himself so low. Oh! I ask your heart what it will give for so much love, what it will suffer for Him? Is there any injury, poverty, affliction, any outward or inward grief which you will not cheerfully endure? Will you not suffer from all kinds of persons, whether enemies or friends, superiors or inferiors, from those you have obliged, as well as from those who have not received any favour from you? Will it be able, after reflecting on a God in such sufferings, to make any exception? Here call to mind something which most grieves you, some affront you have received, some loss you have had, an injustice committed against you, an inclination that torments you, or some hidden grief from which you most keenly suffer. Of all these, that which most afflicts you ought to be the most welcome as the highest proof of your true love for Him whose love for you has constrained Him to suffer so much.

It was with this view that the Saints became so insatiable for crosses; and it is true that, the purer souls are, the more the Son of God makes them suffer. The members who are most closely united to that Head, and have the greatest sympathy with Him, have ever the greatest share in His sufferings.

THIRTEENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IS AN EXAMPLE OF PERFECT MORTIFICATION IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.

Inspice, et fac secundum exemplar quod tibi in monte monstratum est. Look, and make it according to the pattern that was shewn thee in the mount.—Exod. xxv. 40.

It is certain that mortification is not only useful, but absolutely necessary, since by it we die to the life of the old Adam, to live the Divine life, that glorious and incomparable state to which Christians are so happily called. By mortification we not only take away the object of a particular sin, but all the disorders of corrupt nature, which must cease in us and be destroyed, that we may be able to enjoy the eternal happiness which is prepared for us; for nothing impure, according to the witness of the Divine Word, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. It may, therefore, be said that mortification is of the same necessity as eternal salvation—that is to say, a necessity which is absolute. No one can exempt himself from it; every soul must walk in the path of mortification and self-renunciation. And this accounts for the fewness of the elect. The greater part of the world lives in such extreme blindness that we behold on all sides men who, though they profess to have a desire for salvation, yet deliberately choose to walk in the path that leads to perdition. And the reason is that the way

to heaven being narrow and rugged, we have necessarily to mortify ourselves to enter thereon, while the world goes on its own way, thinking of nothing but pleasing the senses, following its own corrupt tendencies, and satisfying the desires of fallen nature.

Truly, when we think seriously that all is lost if we lose our souls, and that salvation is infallibly lost without mortification, it is impossible not to make strong resolutions to declare a holy war against ourselves by giving up self-will and leading a life apart from the senses, whose rule is so disorderly. When we look at the example which Christ has given us on Calvary, and that which He sets before us continually in the Most Holy Sacrament, the soul feels herself more than ever animated to self-abnegation; for, if the incarnate Son of God is the model on which we ought to form our life, if the Eternal Father will save only those who are conformed unto His likeness, the obligation we have to mortify ourselves is indispensable. We need only cast our eyes on the Divine Eucharist and consider what is done there, to be entirely convinced of this truth. For does it not seem that Our Divine Redeemer has no other judgment or will than that of the Priest, by whom He allows Himself to be treated as one that is blind; He has no movement but that which the Priest gives Him; He does not prefer one place more than another; in It He *deprives Himself* of the natural use of His bodily

senses, being as one that is dead, since He is united There to the appearances an inanimate substance.

Such is the Pattern of Whom we ought to be the copy and the image. We must, in order to be like Him, bear His features and resemblance. *Qui dicit se in Christo manere, debet, sicut ille ambulavit et ipse ambulare.* The Christian who professes to be a disciple of Jesus Christ must walk in His steps, and follow His example. For the Sacred Word does not bring before us the imitation of a crucified Lord as a thing good and useful, but as a thing altogether necessary. I pause here to ask if you know this. If you know it, what are you doing? I leave you to meditate upon it.

FOURTEENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IS THE MEMORIAL OF HIS PAINFUL PASSION IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Quotiescumque enim manducabitis panem hunc, et calicem bibetis, mortem Domini annuntiabitis donec veniat. For as often as ye eat this Bread and drink this Chalice, ye shall shew the death of the Lord till He come.—1 Cor. xi. 26.

One of the ends of the institution of the Divine Eucharist is to remind us of the suffering and grief of Christ's Holy Passion, of which He would make a commemoration in His Own Person. The Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar is a lively representation of the death of our Blessed Lord, and for this

reason It is instituted under the two species really separated, to signify to us the real separation of His Body and His Blood on Calvary. This is what made St. Ambrose say that the Church celebrates daily the death and burial of Her Crucified Lord. And truly it is too signal a benefit not to think of it every day of our lives.

God dying on a cross for love ought to be the great occupation of our minds and the object of our dearest affections. This loving, crucified God ought never to be absent from our memory, and if our ingratitude did not exceed everything that the imagination can picture, our hearts no doubt would be strangely touched at the pains our dear Redeemer has vouchsafed to suffer in order to restore our fallen race.

This, O my soul, is indeed the design of thy God in the institution of the Most Holy Sacrament; but, alas! the bad use we make of graces so liberally communicated deprives us of the fruits and the effects which these adorable designs of God would otherwise infallibly produce in our souls. We see a Saint Ignatius, so zealous for the greater glory of his Divine Master—we see him shedding such abundance of tears in celebrating those Holy Mysteries, which represent the death of Jesus, that it was thought he would lose his sight. This great lover of Jesus was often so much affected, that he *swooned away* with love, and had to be carried *from the Altar,* because he could stand no longer.

On one occasion, on Christmas Day, having twice celebrated Holy Mass, he seemed likely to die from the effects.

How many other holy souls have been penetrated and overcome with the same deep and painful love! We have read of Saints on whose minds the impression caused by the Sacrifice of the Mass was as vivid as though they had been present at that Sacrifice on Calvary, of which this is the Memorial, differing only in the mode of its offering. But we, how lightly do we pass over these things! Could we manifest greater indifference if all that faith teaches were a mere fable? And yet our memories are impressed, and our hearts melted, by whatever is touching and pathetic even though we know it to be mere fiction, and the creation of fancy. Meanwhile the Blood of a God, which flowed so copiously from all Its fountains with unspeakable pain and unutterable torment—insomuch that the very sun hid his face, while the earth trembled, and hardest rocks were rent asunder;—this self same Blood in very substance is daily shed for us in its mystic outpouring on our Altars, and our hearts are frozen still, and harder than adamantine rocks.

Do we really believe what our faith teaches? Let us look into ourselves and see the dispositions of our souls regarding this Memorial of the Passion of our Saviour. Let us consider what we have thought of it in the past and what we ought to think of it in *future.* Then let us reflect on the extreme gentle-

ness of the sweet love of our Kind Redeemer. We have already said that He is the example of the perfect mortification of which we have an absolute necessity! To soften our path of sorrow, He puts before us His pains, His sufferings, His holy death. For if He, the only Son of the Eternal Father, enters into glory by such a painful road, we, if we truly love Him, shall find it sweet to follow Him. We ought to be greatly confused to live at our ease, when our Creator suffered even unto death. But He, seeing our repugnance at suffering, takes away, by His Death, all that is most dreadful, and institutes the Most Holy Sacrament for our comfort; He acts like a good father, who gives the best portion to his child and reserves the worst for himself.

Now suffering is the real medicine of our diseases; of pride, of pleasure, which have ruined us; but men will not have it, so they still languish, and their diseases threaten them with eternal death. God became incarnate, He made Himself the Man of Sorrows, He was satiated with opprobrium; He gave Himself to be the Food of men, and they may be cured of all their ills if they will make a holy use of the little suffering He sends them, and which ought to seem sweet and pleasant to us, after contemplating those of the Adorable Jesus. We shall be able to bear them very easily if we draw our strength from the Most *Holy* Sacrament, the Bread of the Strong.

FIFTEENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT IS HOST AND VICTIM.

Sacrificatur et offertur nomini meo oblatio munda quia magnum est nomen meum in gentibus, dicit Dominus exercituum. In every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation: for My Name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts.—Mal. i. 11.

It is fitting that the hymn of silence should be rendered to the God of Holy Zion, since the infinite greatness of His Ever Adorable Being can only be comprehended by Himself. The Seraphim, those Spirits full of light as well as love, who dwell in the regions of brightness, and amidst admirable splendour that surrounds them on every side, veil their faces and their eyes with their wings, to shew us the impossibility of bearing the full blaze of the majesty of God whom they behold unveiled as He is in Himself, but Whom they cannot comprehend.

This has imposed silence on the most enlightened and saintly souls, who teach us that we never speak better of God than when we are convinced that we can never speak of Him worthily. This has withheld them from discoursing and reasoning on His perfections; the sight of His inconceivable excellence, plunging them into an abyss of astonishment and admiration, where the mind is, as it were, blinded with too great light, at the dis-

covery of such immense glory. The soul then, finds herself introduced into a holy obscurity, or, as it were, into a sacred night, where she only sees and thinks how God is above all sight and all thought; that He is altogether different from what we can imagine, and express. This often makes such enlightened souls sigh, even when they speak of God in devout company, knowing that His Infinite Majesty is elevated far above all that the most favoured souls can realise.

St. Catherine of Sienna and the Blessed Angela di Foligna, have sometimes said, when they were pressed to speak of God, that it would be but blasphemous; their great enlightenment causing them to see that the most holy discourse concerning Him is always far beneath what He is. *Magnus Dominus et laudabilis nimis!* Great is the Lord and worthy of all praise! *Et magnitudinis ejus non est finis.* Of His greatness, there is no end. It is without bounds and without limit. What cause there is to weep over the unhappy darkness of this wretched world, at the blindness of men, who have so low an estimate of The Divinity, who speak of Him with so little respect, who honour Him with so little fear. *Ignoto Deo.* We ought to go from town to town, from one country to another, from one kingdom to another, and cry out to the unknown God. *Quod ergo ignorantes colitis,* whom men profess to serve without knowing. Oh! if creatures only knew a little

of the greatness of God, they would never venture to offend Him by committing the least venial sin. Whenever Saint Theresa, in view of the majesty of God, thought of an imperfection, she assures us that her hair stood on end with horror. Saint Catherine of Genoa also protests that the shadow of a venial sin was capable of causing death to an enlightened soul, and reducing any substance to powder, though it were hard as adamant. The world knows not these truths, because it knows not God; but, O my soul! we can conceive something of them, if we consider what passes in the Most Holy Sacrament.

In the Incarnation, the Son of God, as the Apostle teaches us, "*emptied Himself;*" a depth of humility which we better understand upon Calvary, where we behold the Son of the Eternal Father in the throes of death. For in that mystery, the wisdom of God was exercised in withdrawing all the glory which belongs to an Infinite Being.

But the same sacrifice He still continues daily: He still offers the same Oblation in all parts of the world, in order that the Infinite greatness of His Father may be honoured by an Infinite Victim. *Sacrificatur et offertur nomini meo oblatio munda; quia magnum est nomen meum in gentibus, dicit Dominus exercituum.* Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, immolating Himself as Host and victim, shows us how great is the name of the Lord. Strange spectacle, if it were well understood! What

should we say if the Lord were to reveal to us that He intended to destroy men and the universe, to reduce all the Angels and even His holy Mother, to nothing. Let us imagine the fire kindled by the anger of God, spreading over the earth and entirely consuming it; this would, no doubt, be a terrible sight. But what is done at a single Mass, is something infinitely greater. For supposing all creatures were destroyed, what would it be, but nothing falling back again into nothingness? But to witness a God annihilating Himself in the way of which the Apostle speaks, O ye Angels of Heaven! hide your faces at the sight of such a miracle, and let men henceforth speak of nothing but Victims and Sacrifices and Annihilations! Let men come and learn at the foot of the Altar, in the school of Jesus, in the Most Holy Sacrament, that their life ought to be a continual death; that the character they ought to bear is that of sacrifice and victim; that they ought not to allow a moment of their life to pass without offering sacrifices to the greatness of the God they adore. Let them learn that they are no longer their own, that they belong to no creature but only to Jesus, with Whom they ought to become victims and sacrifices, to the Greatness and Holiness of the Eternal Father.

We should speak only of the sword, to cut, to destroy, to immolate ourselves and all that we hold most dear. We ought, like Abraham, to have *always the knife* in hand, to destroy our Isaac, that

is, our self-love, our sweetest pleasures. Let us no longer complain of having rebellious and obstinate passions, but let us remember the spirit of sacrifice, which ought to be inseparable from our will. We should rejoice at having this little troop of passions and evil inclinations, so that we may offer them in sacrifice; and whenever we feel they rise up against our reason, we should instantly force ourselves to destroy them, for the glory of God.

Let us remember, whenever we enter our Churches, the holy fear that ought to take possession of us in the Presence of a God so Holy. Let us think of the purity of heart that is required to assist at Holy Mass, where the God of purity so lovingly gives Himself. Therefore, whenever we cross the threshold of a Church, let us tremble with fear: if we are guilty of the slightest sin, let us not delay to weep for our fault: let us ask God's pardon, by an act of sincere contrition, followed by one of love, and make an inviolable resolution of rather dying a thousand times than commit a single sin for the future. When we come to the part of the Mass where the Son of God immolates Himself, I ask you, O Christian, whoever you may be, to search out what prevents your belonging to that God who is sacrificing Himself for you? Is there a single creature, father, mother, child, friend, passion, inclination, health, riches, honour, beauty, pleasure, that you ought not to give up? Meditate profoundly upon what sin is, which you commit so

lightly, since a God is reduced to immolate Himself unceasingly to appease the wrath of His Father, justly incensed at our offences. Consider that the Beloved Son of the Eternal Father, annihilates Himself (so to speak) in order to make reparation for the dishonour which you show to God when you desire to occupy the mind or heart of a creature, thus insolently becoming His rival; and since creatures still indulge in their vanity and ambition, the Son of God unceasingly humbles Himself, age after age, in one prolonged abasement.

It is with these thoughts that we should assist at the Sacred Mysteries, if we desire to be there in spirit and in truth. This subject, well considered, is most weighty and important, and ought to be examined at leisure, in order that we may penetrate it with heavenly light; but I know, O world, that thou wilt have nothing to do with it, for how low and grovelling are thy thoughts on the greatness of God! But to you, O Christian souls, I have only one word to say:—you must live a living death. Bring to our Lord offerings and victims; make sacrifices to Him, remembering that you can render to Him none more acceptable than that of yourself, by giving up the maxims of the world, destroying in your mind, all esteem of riches, honours and pleasures; in your memory, all useless thoughts and reflections; in your will, every desire, every inclination, in order that God alone may reign in you.

SIXTEENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT IS THE DELIGHT OF THE MOST HOLY VIRGIN AND THE SAINTS.

Ecce venit desideratus cunctis gentibus. The desired of all nations shall come.—Aggeus ii. 8.

If Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, is loved by a little company of faithful lovers, I am not astonished at it. If He is There the Delight of His Saints, I am not surprised; for the Saints, having their minds enlightened by such holy inspirations, can do no otherwise than love the most endearing of mysteries. But what I marvel at is the sight of the forgetfulness of the rest of creatures towards so loving a God. Let us consider the ardent affection of the Saints, and we shall find great reason to be confounded and humbled, and put to the blush for shame, when we reflect on the little we do, and on the excess of our ingratitude.

Saint Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, visited her beloved Spouse in the Most Holy Sacrament, thirty times daily (a devotion that Jesus Himself inspired her to practise), a clear proof that such a devotion is pleasing to Him. To those who love not, thirty times will seem a great number; but to a loving heart it is far too seldom.

See if you are of the number of these lovers of Jesus, by the care you have of visiting our dear Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament.

Saint Francis Xavier, that great Apostle of Japan, after much labour, and wearied as he was with the painful work that his apostolic duties required of him, often used to sleep in the sacristy, that he might pass a part of the night more happily before the Most Holy Sacrament.

Saint Dominic did the same, and Saint Catherine of Sienna, a nun of the Order of that great Saint, could not separate herself from the Divine Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. She would at times only take a little rest between the strokes of the bell which rung for Matins, in order that at that hour there might be some one to pay homage to her Divine King.

The venerable Priest, M. Jean, the worthy founder of an Order of nuns dedicated to our Lady of Mercy, passed a long time without having any other bed than the altar-steps, and by a special act of Divine Providence, he died suddenly close to the Holy Altar where the God of all love reposes. Love having made him live at the foot of the altar, the same love made him die there.

Saint Henry, that chaste Emperor who lived virginally with his wife, the Empress Cunegunda, passed whole nights before the Most Holy Sacrament; Jesus reposing in the Ciborium being the only rest of his body as well as of his mind.

The virtuous Marie Diaz, who dwelt at Avila in the 17th century, lived in the tribune of a Church, *by permission* of the Bishop, and during many

years, never went out except for confession and communion. Other lovers of our loving Jesus, not being able to have that happiness, have tried to share in it, by living as near the Church as they could.

The Blessed Margaret of Hungary, after communicating, held the communion cloth (though a Princess) before the others who were going to communicate.

St. Collette valued her sight only because it gave her the happiness of looking at the Sacred Host.

St. Wenceslas, King of Bohemia, with his own hands reaped the wheat, and gathered the grapes necessary for celebrating Mass. Do you not admire the zeal, the fervour, and the devotion of such holy souls for Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament? As to myself, if I must utter my thoughts, I assure you that it all seems to me very little: for after all, what can creatures, who are as nothing, do for the infinite majesty of God?

If the above is true, which it undoubtedly is, and if the great actions of Saints are so little, compared to the unfathomable love of Jesus, alas! what will become of us, if we turn our eyes upon our own actions? What excuses can we allege, that our occupations, our affairs, leave us no time (as we pretend) to converse with Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament? We have seen a St. Francis Xavier charged with the affairs of a world; he preached the faith in twenty-four kingdoms and baptised

twelved hundred thousand persons, yet he found leisure for this. We have seen a St. Henry, amidst the occupations and cares of an empire, find time enough to pass whole nights in the presence of his dear Master. A St. Wenceslas, who, king as he was, knew how to plough the earth and cultivate the vines, from which were gathered the wheat and the wine required for the Holy Altar.

We are neither the apostles of a world, nor emperors, nor kings, and it is in vain to say that we have not a few moments of leisure to devote to the Adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament! Let us admit that this devotion of which we have been speaking, is enough to humiliate us, awaken in us the fire of divine love, and lead us to imitate those holy souls.

With this design, I have related it. What profit will you derive from it? Shall I gain anything from your hearts? Shall I not carry away one that will love our Master? With this view I beseech you to lift up the eyes of your mind, to contemplate above the love of all the Saints, the admirable, and incomparable heart of the glorious Virgin, a heart most loving to Jesus, and the most loved by Him; a heart which was the very sanctuary of divine love; a heart which contained in itself more love for Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, than all hearts that ever were, or ever shall be; a heart ever pure, which was never stained with original sin, or ever committed *actual sin;* a heart ever burning with most holy

flames of pure love, and which in life and in death was for God alone. Let us think of this most loving heart, and in approaching such a furnace of divine love, let the ice of our hearts melt, while the fire of holy love is kindled, and let us all conceive great ardour of devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament. The Divine Eucharist *must* have all our love, all our care; it *must* be our dearest joy; and it is incredible how efficaciously a cordial devotion to the Mother of God contributes towards it.

SEVENTEENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT IS THE OBJECT OF THE LOVE AND VENERATION OF ANGELS.

Duos quoque Cherubim facies ex utraque parte Oraculi; respiciantque se mutuo versis vultibus in Propitiatorium. Thou shalt make also two Cherubim on the two sides of the Oracle;.....and let them look one towards another, their faces being turned towards the Propitiatory.—Exod. xxv. 18, 20.

THE Cherubim, on each side of the ark, facing one another, but with their eyes turned towards the Propitiatory, were a figure of the respect, the admiration, and the love of the angelic choirs for this most august of our mysteries. They look at each other in astonishment, to show us how we ought to marvel at the goodness of our God.

Saint John Chrysostom, as his disciple Nilus relates, saw these immortal spirits near the Divine Eucharist, expressing by their attitude, their humble

liation at this Mystery of Charity, as well as their love of It. They appeared in great numbers, clad in bright robes of admirable glory, their feet bare, and their eyes fixed on the altar. They kept profound silence and manifested extreme respect. By their beautiful vesture they declare to us that they who enter our Churches to adore the Most Holy Sacrament ought to be arrayed in the garment of divine grace. By their naked feet they remind us of that detachment from all earthly affections which should purify our vision to see God alone. Their eyes fixed on the sacred mysteries, their silence and lowly posture admonish us of the reverence and angelic modesty which ought to be observed in the presence of the Most Holy.

Hence the Prophet cries out: *In conspectu Angelorium psallam tibi;* in the presence of angels he sang Psalms, taking them for an example of reverence and love, that he might pray and sing the more worthily.

These Spirits, so full of love, are continually paying their court to the Prince of Glory in the Blessed Sacrament; they are there all day and all night, assembling in great numbers whenever the dread mysteries of the life-giving Body and Blood of Jesus Christ are celebrated. Yet it is not for them that Jesus dwells in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

He is there for men and men leave Him alone! He *is not* there for Angels, nevertheless they

accompany Him wherever He goes, in town and country, and in every place where the Body of this most sweet Saviour is to be found.

It is thus the Angels love Jesus Christ, Who died not for the sins of Angels, but for ours; He has preferred our nature to theirs; the Eternal Word has chosen to become human rather than angelic. Some Doctors even affirm that a man is more indebted to Jesus Christ for a single good thought, than all the Angels are indebted to Him for all their grace and all their glory; and this because every least thought of ours that is good, has cost Jesus Christ His Blood and His Life; which was not necessary to obtain grace for the Angels. Here, I entreat you to reflect a little. We have not the least good thought, but it has cost the life of a God; and yet we allow so many good thoughts to pass without making use of them; so many precious moments, alas! much more precious than we can imagine, are lost to us for ever.

O! that the love of the Angels would inflame our zeal, to pay our homage to Him more assiduously than hitherto we have done.

The Venerable Mother Madeleine of St. Joseph, of the Order of St. Theresa, was animated with an ardent desire of imitating the Angels in the way they keep Jesus company in the Divine Eucharist. She said that there were souls who, after death, offered with the Angels their continual respect and adoration to Jesus in our Tabernacles.

She often used to exclaim to her sisters; "O my sisters, who amongst you will be one of those souls? As to myself, I desire greatly to have that favour; if you wish to find me after my death, seek me near the Holy Tabernacle." And God made her to be seen in a bodily form, after her death, paying homage in these Sanctuaries of Love.

It is good to have a special devotion to the Angels who are in our Churches; honouring them by some mortification or good work, such as communicating in their honour, that they may cause us to share in their respect and love. Let us entreat them to supply our deficiency, beseeching them, that whilst we sleep, or when the occupations of life oblige us to leave the Church, they would love and adore Jesus for us, assuring them that we take part in whatever they may say in our stead; that it is what we wish to say, but alas! know not how; that it belongs only to them to pay worthy homage and court to the King of Heaven and Earth. With this object we must occasionally unite our love to theirs and renew their intentions. Oh! how sweet it is to converse with the Angels and make the friendship of those pure Intelligences!

EIGHTEENTH MOTIVE.

JESUS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT IS CONSUMED WITH LOVE.

Cum dilexisset suos qui erant in mundo, in finem dilexit eos. Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end.—John xiii. 1.

GOD'S love for man had no beginning; He loved him with an eternal love, which He has proved in bringing him out of nothing by creation, and in preserving him continually by the care of His loving providence. This love burst forth at the Incarnation and at His painful death on Calvary. He loved us unto the end, says the Holy Evangelist of predilection, the dear Disciple of Love; that is, as Pope Urban says, in instituting this Banquet of the Most Holy Sacrament, Jesus has loved us with a love that exceeds all the bounds of love, a transcendent love, an overflowing love, in giving Himself to us in the Divine Eucharist; since this Loving Saviour, giving Himself as food, wishes to unite Himself to us in the highest and most loving union that we can conceive.

At the Incarnation, the Uncreated Word united Himself personally to but one human nature and He was only to be found in one country; but in the Holy Communion, He unites Himself to all who approach Him, and He is found, under the

species of bread, in every part of the world wherever there are Churches and Altars.

Truly, we must acknowledge that the Most Holy Sacrament is the height of the love of God-Man ; and though God is all love and love everywhere, He is more than ever love in this Blessed Sacrament: *Propter nimiam charitatem suam quâ dilexit nos.* The charity of God to us is excessive, says the Apostle ; when we think of it, we must indeed exclaim that it is beyond all measure.

It is thus, O God, that Thou lovest the world ; it is thus Thou lovest me ; it is thus He loves you who are reading these truths. But, O my Lord and my God, permit me to see in Thy presence, how the world loves Thee, and how my own heart loves Thee. Reader, look into yours. It is true, it is true that the love of God for frail creatures has no bounds ; and we worms of earth, in our nothingness, would limit and circumscribe our love of God.

Far be it from our hearts to have these ungrateful thoughts ; away from us those designs unworthy of the generosity of true love which lead us to prescribe certain limits to the paths of holy love, and which make so many persons, nay, the greater part of men say, I will not be a saint ; it is sufficient for me that I do not offend God mortally. O words, O thoughts, that ought to be held in abhorrence by souls who know what it is to love God.

I ask you who give a thought to these things,

whether, if you loved some one very dearly and that person were under all possible obligations to you, you would accept in return for your love, an avowal that he acknowledged your affection and would prove it by not taking your life or doing you grievous bodily harm. Would you be satisfied with gratitude and affection such as this? Would not your heart be filled with indignation at his base conduct? Nevertheless, it is too often the case that the infinite love of a God is everywhere treated in this way, and that which a creature could not bear and what you would not endure, a God must submit to.

Enough, my soul, my resolution is made; let us die a thousand deaths, rather than lend ourselves to such cowardly designs. Let us aspire with courage to the ways of holy perfection, since they alone are the paths of generous and faithful love. Never let us say, I will love God so much and no more; but let us love Him as much as He wishes us, as much as our share of grace will permit us to love Him; let us love Him as the Saints did; let us take for our example their noble actions and virtues, which divine love inspired them to perform. Let us walk in their steps; in poverty, in contempt, in suffering, which are the paths of pure love. Let us remember that the God of their love ought also to be the God of our love; that our hearts possess the same Jesus, ever consumed with *love for us,* in the Most Holy Sacrament.

SECOND TREATISE.

PRACTICES FOR THE ADORATION AND THE LOVE OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.

FIRST PRACTICE.

TO SET APART A TIME FOR THE ADORATION OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT AND TO DO ALL THAT IS POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH THIS DEVOTION EVERYWHERE.

Venite, adoremus, et procidamus ante Deum, ploremus coram Domino qui fecit nos; quia ipse est Dominus Deus noster, nos autem populus ejus, et oves pascuæ ejus. Come let us adore and fall down: and weep before the Lord who made us. For He is the Lord our God, and we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.—(Psalm xciv. 6, 7.)

IT is natural to souls who are really penetrated with divine love and who have received some light on the greatness of the Infinite Being of God, not only to offer their vows and respect to the majesty of their Sovereign, but also to invite every person

to His Presence. "They wish," says the seraphic Theresa, "to cry out to all men and excite them to the love of God; they cannot contain within themselves the sacred fire that consumes them, without letting the flames appear."

"See," says that great lover of Jesus, Saint Augustine, "how the Psalmist does not content himself with glorifying the Lord himself, but calls and invites all the world to give eternal praises to his God. 'Come,' says that holy king, 'let us adore Him, let us fall down before the Great God; let us weep tears of joy in His Divine Presence, because He who has made us, who has brought us out of nothing, frail, vile creatures as we are, wishes to love us as His dear people, and to treat us as the sheep of His pasture.'"

David desires to sing eternally the great mercies of the Lord; he wishes to proclaim them to all men; he desires them to be consumed with love and admiration when they consider them. But I ask you, O my soul, what he would have done, if he had seen what we see, if he had known what we know? What would he have said to men? What would he have said to all creatures? Oh! blessed are the eyes which see the truths our Holy Religion teaches! Oh! would to God that men listened to them, that they would open their eyes to the light of faith: our Churches would then change their appearance. The paths of Sion would lament no more at being deserted. Love would

make all men hasten into our Sanctuaries, to offer Adoration to the Loving Jesus and to bear Him company. *Venite, adoremus.* This love incites me to use all the strength of my soul, to invite men to adore the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, and to this end, I will suggest to you a few practices.

The first that presents itself to my mind is an excellent one and highly to be commended and established in many towns in France.* It consists in having the Most Holy Sacrament adored, from twelve o'clock at noon until evening, by a number of persons who set apart a few hours for the pur-

* This practice no longer exists, except in several seminaries and religious communities. But we have thought it necessary to retain this chapter, because it contains useful advice regarding visits to the Most Holy Sacrament. In many dioceses, such as Paris and Versailles, our Bishops have established, after the custom at Rome, the Perpetual Adoration. The Most Holy Sacrament is exposed every day, either for one day or three consecutive days, or alternately, in the Churches and Chapels of their dioceses. Besides the daily Perpetual Adoration, an association of Christian men exists at Paris, directed by ecclesiastical superiors, for the Adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament during the night. The Exposition commences about nine o'clock in the evening and terminates at five in the morning, with prayer, meditation, and Holy Mass, when most of the adorers go to Holy Communion. Thanks to this work, there is not a single instant, day or night, in which Jesus Christ does not receive on earth, in the Sacrament of His love, the adoration and homage which are continually offered to Him in heaven by the Angels and Saints.

pose, arriving successively, in order that Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament should not be left alone, but that He may always find faithful adorers to offer their respect to Him in spirit and in truth, in our Churches.

The time appointed for this practice, from twelve at noon until evening, rather than the morning, is because in the morning there are generally worshippers in our Churches, assisting at the Holy Mysteries.

There are places where each person holds a lighted taper during his hour, to make reparation to the Infinite Majesty of God, for all the sacrilege, profanation and affronts committed against Him in the Divine Eucharist. Those who cannot hold tapers do not fail to dwell with sorrow on the enormous crimes that have been committed against the God of love in the Most Holy Sacrament, asking pardon for them and sighing bitterly for sins that even the devils themselves would scarcely dare to commit, and the least of which is enough to cause the death of every creature and the destruction of the universe.

O how good, how infinitely good is the God we adore, not to have destroyed us! How marvellous to see the world still existing after such an excess of wickedness and malice! O love! how admirable art Thou and how little art Thou known.

This is a most holy practice, but the zeal of the lovers of Jesus does not stop here; they cannot

endure that a moment either of day or night should elapse, in which Jesus is not adored. This is why the Perpetual Adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament has been established, in imitation of the perpetual rosary of the Most Holy Mother of God.

The hours of the day are taken by such as live in the world, and those of the night, by the religious men and women and other devout persons; and in order that the practice may be easier, those who cannot take their hour in the presence of the Most Holy Sacrament in the Church, observe it in their houses or elsewhere, or even in walking, having the intention to fulfil it.

The hour may be employed either in vocal or mental prayer. As many hours may be devoted to it during the year as one's devotion and opportunities permit; and though only one should be appropriated, this slight duty to Jesus ought to be observed. Persons should go to Holy Communion on the day they take their hour, and if anything prevent it, another person may be substituted. The hour fixed may be changed if necessary for one earlier or later.

The principal feast of this association is the Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi. To prepare for it, some mortifications must be observed on the vigil and preceding days. Confession and Holy Communion on the day itself, giving some *unusual alms,* helping one's neighbour as much as one

is able, in temporal things and still more in spiritual aid.

The associates hear Mass every day, if possible; and visit the Most Holy Sacrament once, at least, in the afternoon. If passing a Church, they enter to adore, or at least, offer in spirit, a short and pious invocation. They are careful to assist at the Exposition or when the Viaticum is carried to the sick, and during the day they frequently recite these words, turning towards a Church: "Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar."

They try to communicate spiritually as often as possible, and at least every morning and evening, on remembering the Death of Jesus and uniting themselves, in heart, to Him. Care must be taken to avoid all sin, renouncing it, and making a good resolution not to return to it, saying from the heart; O loving Jesus, let there be no more sin; I detest all that I have committed, because Thou art God, and because I love Thee. O my dear Jesus, my heart is open to Thee; come, O Saviour of my soul, come and dwell in this miserable heart which is consumed with regret at having, alas! loved Thee so little. O most sweet Jesus, though there were neither heaven nor hell, I would still love Thee, I would still hold in horror, as I now do, all the crimes I have committed.

But even where this confraternity is not established, people may greatly contribute to the love and adoration of Jesus in the Divine Eucharist,

by visiting Him often and inviting others to do the same. Zealous persons have been seen going five or seven times every day, and when they were ill or prevented, they have sent others to pay homage in their stead to the great King, Jesus, and to make excuses to Him for their inability to come to Him. Love is all that is wanted, and then one can do all; love is rich in a thousand holy inventions to honour the Beloved.

SECOND PRACTICE.

TO ACCOMPANY THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT WHEN IT IS CARRIED TO THE SICK.

Si quis mihi ministrat, me sequatur. If any man minister to me, let him follow me. (John xii. 26.)

If any one is My servant, let him follow Me, says our Divine Master. And it is only just, that those who were the slaves of hell and who groaned under the tyranny of the devil, having been redeemed by the infinite price of the Blood of the Adorable Jesus, should never again separate themselves from their Divine Liberator.

It is an incomparable honour that God does to men in permitting them to approach so near to Him and with such facility, and they must indeed be unhappy who do not accept it by shewing Him love and gratitude.

It is in this meeting with God that a man ought to give marks of his faith, that he ought to make it *seen that* he is of the number of his Lord's true ser-

vants by accompanying Him when He is taken to the sick; for if the Truth Himself assures us that he who is His servant must follow Him, how shall we show that we are indeed in His service, if we do not follow Him? And if we are miserable enough not to be among His servants and do not follow Him, who will then be our Master and Lord, and who will be our guide to lead us? What road shall we take? O Lord, where shall we go, if we go not after Thee, Who art the Light of the world, the Way, the Truth, and the Life?

How great ought to be the shame of men that, when the Great God comes from Heaven to visit them in their houses, during sickness, no creatures leave their wretched dwellings or even take a few steps to bear Him company! If earthly princes were to honour all their subjects, by visiting them in this way, they would not be left alone, for every one would be moved by it; it is only the Great and Eternal King who is treated thus; it is only He to whom belongs all honour, who is so dishonoured! So true is it, (I weep as I write it,) that God is not known in the world; that the earth on which we live is a path of forgetfulness, where He, who ought to be the object of all our occupations, is not thought of.

It would then be a very just practice to remedy this disorder, by zealously accompanying the Most Holy Sacrament when it is carried to the sick, a thing which ought not to be difficult to a Christian

who knows and believes this Mystery. In times past, there might be seen in many towns, even persons of high rank fulfilling this duty with unparalleled care, bare-headed magistrates with lighted tapers; ladies, delicately reared, who rose quickly at the first sound of the bell, however early in the morning, to have the honour of following the Prince of Angels.

There was in the town of Dijon, even a private association established, to accompany the Most Holy Sacrament when It was taken to the sick. At that time, Jesus Christ never left the parishes of that town but in triumph, and was not taken through the streets without numerous followers.[1]

This is a beautiful example of devotion for other towns, where Jesus is often seen in His charitable visits to the sick, accompanied only by one Priest, an assistant, and two or three others.

That holy man, Cæsar de Buz, resolved to follow the Blessed Sacrament, with a lighted taper in his hand, not caring what remarks might be made about him by other gentlemen, whom he expected to meet in the suite of the General of the district. Though he was still a worldly-minded man, and even a vain one, he was recompensed for his mortification; for the following night, a light from

[1] This practice is no longer observed in the greater part of the towns in France. But it is much to be wished that wherever the Most Holy Sacrament is solemnly carried, it *should receive* the same honours from all true Christians.

heaven appeared in his room, which enlightened his mind, and enabled him to detach himself from the false and deceptive love of the world, and to walk ever after in the holy paths of pure love.

All the greatness of the house of Austria comes from one of its ancestors, who rendered a signal service and honour to a Priest, who was carrying the Holy Sacrament to a sick man, from one village to another; the prince getting off his horse, and making the Priest mount, whilst he followed on foot.

THIRD PRACTICE.

TO COMMUNICATE OFTEN, BUT WORTHILY.

Accipite et comedite: hoc est Corpus Meum.—Take ye and eat: This is my Body. (Matt. xxvi. 26.)

It would be of slight importance to those who have devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament, to adore It to remain in Its presence, and accompany It wherever It may be, if they did not receive It in their hearts in the Most Holy Communion. Jesus has said it, and it is just that He should be obeyed: "Take and eat, This is my Body." The Christian then is obliged to take It, to receive It, and to eat It.

To the Church this commandment has seemed so great, that, at the commencement of the first ages of Christianity, according to the doctrine of St. Thomas, all the faithful who assisted at the cele-

bration of the Holy Mysteries, were obliged to communicate: and if afterwards the Church judged it fitting to relax this rule, the hard hearts of Christians were the cause of it; the Church still desires, says the Council of Trent, that communion were frequent as in the first ages. The reason of this is because this Divine Sacrament is instituted in the form of Food; and as our bodies cannot subsist without proper nourishment, so neither can our souls live the life of grace without that Heavenly Food, which our good God, in the excess of His charity, has destined for them; hence if the Most Holy Sacrament is called Bread, It is, at the same time, called Daily Bread.

It is thus that St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome understand it in the words of the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily Bread." This is confirmed by St. Matthew, who calls it supersubstantial bread. *Panem nostrum, id est Christum, petimus nobis dari quotidie,* says St. Cyprian (serm. 6, de Oratione dominica.) When, says that holy Father, we ask for our daily bread, it is Jesus Christ we ask for. For which reason St. Augustine (serm. 18, de Verbis Domini) asks Christians why they wait to have it only at the end of the year, since It is *daily* bread? *Si quotidianus est panis, cur post annum illum sumis? Accipe quotidie quod tibi prosit quotidie.* Receive every day that which will daily be to thee a benefit.

St. Ambrose says the same thing in his 5th Book

on the Sacraments, chap. 4. Manna was the figure of this sacrament, and it was to be gathered every day before sunrise; thus teaching us the care we should have to communicate every day.

The devil, who clearly sees that the Holy Eucharist is our life, whereas he desires only our death, uses all his efforts to prevent Holy Communion. *Si posset,* says the devout book of the Imitation of Jesus Christ, *a sacra Communione cessare faceret.* Were he powerful enough, he would take away the Holy Communion entirely: and it is true that if we would cause the death even of a strong man in good health, we need only deprive him of food, and we should soon see him become weak by degrees, lose his strength, and at last, his life. *Percussus sum ut fœnum et aruit Cor meum, quia oblitus sum comedere panem meum.* "I was dried up like hay," says the Psalmist, "because I had forgotten to eat my bread."

In the earthly Paradise, God forbade our first parents to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; the devil persuaded them to eat it. In the law of grace, God commands us to eat His Body; the devil says: eat It not. But as Jesus wills it, we also must will it, otherwise we frustrate the chief end He had in instituting this Sacrament of Love.

It will be in vain that we honour Him by perpetual adoration, if we do not communicate, and we shall deprive Him of His intention to unite

Himself to us. Methinks I see this admirable Lover of the children of men, taking Himself into His own Blessed Hands on the day of His excess of love; methinks I hear from His Sacred Lips, the oracle of all truth, those loving words: "Take and eat." Yes, it is true, He deserves infinite adoration wherever He is; He deserves it in the Most Holy Sacrament; but His great end in the Eucharist is to unite Himself to us, enter into our bodies, by giving Himself as Food, to be one and the same with us, or rather that we should become one with Him.

He does not say to His Apostles: Kneel down and tremble in My Presence; but: "Take and eat." If the Holy Eucharist had been instituted principally to cast terror into the mind, doubtless the great Jesus would have appeared in It in a different way.

The throne of glory where He is seated at the right hand of His Father, is much more calculated to astonish men, who ordinarily are only moved at what appears great; but Jesus has put Himself under the species of bread, because He wishes to serve for the spiritual food of our souls, as bread serves for the nourishment of our bodies; it would then be rejecting His love not to approach the Holy Sacrament.

The seraphic St. Theresa was so penetrated with this idea, that she communicated every day.

St. Catherine of Sienna became ill every day she

did not communicate. St. Magdalene of Pazzi, having from her infancy, an extreme desire of communicating, which at that age she could not do, used to approach her mother the day she communicated, and would not leave her; it was her delight to be near those who had been fed with such Divine Food, and one of the reasons she gave for choosing the convent she entered was, that the nuns communicated every day.

Woe to those who deprive themselves of this Heavenly Bread! Woe to those souls who have not an extreme hunger, an insatiable thirst for the Body and Blood of the Lord of all things, and who are prevented by their desire for earthly things, and who care little for the grace of our Divine Mysteries! O man, of what are you thinking? How long will you be dull of heart, preferring the wretched pleasures of the senses—the false pleasures of the world—to the true delights of the God of Heaven?

To be able every day to be fed by a God and not to embrace this privilege, is what can never be comprehended by an enlightened soul. I affirm before Heaven and earth, that a loving heart would sooner choose to lose an empire, every honour and pleasure in the world, than deprive itself a single day of the Holy Communion. When appointed by God, through obedience and submission, sickness or some other obstacle which occurs under His Divine Providence, then it is reasonable to abstain;

but to keep away through negligence or imperfection, is incomprehensible.

Alas! it is true that the greater number of men communicate rarely, and many, unhappy that they are, never communicate at all, because some are attached to creatures, to the insane love of the world, or to a desire for vengeance; some to money, others to vanity; thus God—the God of all greatness—is forsaken, and people prefer anything to Him.

O Lord! Thou seest it, Thou bearest it, and Thou sayest not a word. Let then the least of Thy creatures speak for Thee. Do Thou open my lips and my mouth shall announce Thy praise.

O men! Is it thus that you love the God of Love; is it thus you treat with contempt His excessive love, and elevate a creature above a God? Let him conceive it who can. I warn you that the Lord is at the door, His judgments are at hand; you are about to die, and sooner than you think; I tell you that the Lord my God will call you to account for all your contempt of His goodness. My consolation, O adorable Jesus! is that, in a little while, Thou shalt take justice on Thine enemy, the world and all its lovers.

Tremble, ye who read this; for though there be nothing more sweet than Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, yet will there be nothing more terrible *than this same* Jesus in the Day of His Vengeance.

At the moment of our death we shall have to give a rigorous account, not only of the unworthy Communions we have made, but also of the many times that, in the order of God, we might have Communicated, and have not done so.

The parable in the Gospel, on this subject, is more fearful than we can say. A man makes a feast, and invites to the banquet a number of persons who excuse themselves; and he, being justly irritated, protests that not one of those persons he invited shall ever be admitted to his table. There is no heart, however self-assured it may feel, that does not tremble, if it reflects, first, that the invited persons beg to be excused; secondly, they allege good reasons for it, because they have bought some land, some merchandize, or because they are married. Does it not seem to you apparently reasonable for a man to excuse himself from going to a feast on the day of his marriage? Nevertheless we keep away from the Sacred Feast to which we are invited for much more trifling reasons, and without even asking pardon of His Divine Majesty. What can we expect from His justice?

See, at last how these invited persons are punished, not because they behave badly at the Table of the Lord who has invited them, but because they keep away from it; and it will be the same with us. But to communicate worthily we must give up our attachments. It is true, there is neither wife, nor children, nor lands, nor goods, nor farms, that can

form our excuse. We must separate from our corrupt nature, we must break our chains; there is nothing that we ought not to leave, and that we ought not to do for the love of a God Who has done all and left all for us.

FOURTH PRACTICE.

TO COMMUNICATE SPIRITUALLY WHEN WE CANNOT COMMUNICATE SACRAMENTALLY.

It may be, O Christian soul, that you are in a state to communicate often and worthily, and that, like the thirsty hart panting after the Living Water, you ardently desire to enjoy the happiness of uniting yourself to Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of His love, but that you are prevented by good and lawful reasons; for example, your occupations and the duties of your position. But here is a holy and very easy practice, which will make up for the loss of that Heavenly Food, and will in a great measure satisfy your desires. It is Spiritual Communion.

It consists, according to St. Thomas, in an ardent desire to receive Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament and in affectionate sentiments, as if He had really been received. Thus, whether you assist at Holy Mass, or whether you are not able to be present, produce in your heart those acts which you are accustomed to make when you approach *the Holy Table*; acts of Faith in the Real Presence

of Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament, acts of hope in an ardent desire to unite yourself to this Divine Saviour; acts of humility at the thought of His infinite greatness and your profound littleness. To animate your devotion, imagine that the Blessed Virgin or one of your patron Saints is coming to present you with the Sacred Host; imagine that you are really receiving It, and repeat several times, and over and over again, these words, or any others dictated by love: "Come, my Jesus, Thou love and life of my soul; come into this poor heart, come and fulfil my desires; come and sanctify my soul; come, O most sweet Jesus! Come! O come!" Then be silent, as if you had really communicated; adore Jesus Christ within you; thank Him, and repeat all the ordinary acts after Holy Communion.

Be well assured that this spiritual Communion, so neglected by Christians in these days, is nevertheless, a real treasure that fills the soul with an infinite number of good things. It is so useful, that I do not fear to say (with many authors, and amongst them Rodriguez, in his "Practice of Christian Perfection," 8th Treatise, vol. ii., chap. 15) that it can produce the same graces as Sacramental Communion, and even greater; for though Sacramental Communion, in its nature, produces greater fruits, because, being a Sacrament, it works by its own virtue; yet a soul desirous of perfection, can make a spiritual Communion with so much humility,

love, and devotion, that it deserves more grace than one who communicates sacramentally, but with less fervour and preparation. This will not surprise you if you reflect that Spiritual Communion inflames souls with holy love, unites them closely to God, and disposes them to receive His most signal graces.

With regard to the satisfaction that God takes in these spiritual Communions, and the graces which He bestows through them, our Lord made known to His faithful servant, the Foundress of the Monastery of Saint Catherine of Sienna, at Naples, by shewing her (as it is said in her life) two precious vessels, one of gold, and the other of silver, and saying to her, that in the gold one He kept her sacramental Communions, and in the silver one her spiritual Communions. He said also to Blessed Jane of the Cross, that, every time she communicated spiritually, she received a grace, resembling in some degree, that which she would have received in sacramental Communion. The holy Council of Trent moreover, highly commends spiritual Communion, and zealously invites all the faithful to practise it; all truly pious souls have always observed this holy exercise.

And what excuse can you give for not doing so? Is it want of time? It cannot be, seeing that a single act of desire and love, as quick as thought, is sufficient.

Nor is it so difficult a practice. Spiritual Communion *has* this advantage over sacramental, that,

as regards the latter, we can only communicate once a day, but we can do so spiritually, not only at all the Masses we may hear, but at any time of the day, in the morning, in the evening, or at night; in the church, or in our room; without the permission of our confessor, without fasting, without being seen by any one, and as often as we feel any devotion for it.

Resolve therefore to do so frequently; it will be one of the easiest and most excellent ways of making progress towards perfection and holiness.

Here is another prayer that may be profitably used: "O Jesus! I believe Thee, and I adore Thee really present in the Holy Sacrament: I love Thee: I desire Thee; come into my heart; I unite myself to Thee; never separate Thyself from me! *'Amore amoris tui moriar, qui amore amoris mei dignatus es mori'* (St. Francis). 'Let me die for love of Thy Love, Who hast deigned to die for the love of my love.' Jesus, all my love; Jesus, all my happiness; inflame my heart with Thy heavenly fire."

FIFTH PRACTICE.

Be silent and respectful in the Presence of the Most Holy Sacrament, and prevent as much as lies in your power, all irreverence in the Church.

Adorabo ad templum sanctum tuum et confitebor nomini tuo. I will worship towards thy holy temple, and I will give glory to thy name.—(Psalm cxxxvii. 2.)

THE Psalmist assures us that he adores God in His

crucifigentes," and yet people appear in the presence of the Eternal God, and talk with less respect than they would in the presence of a person of rank; they laugh, and keep up a conversation about earthly affairs. Is this believing in God? Is it believing in Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament? Is it not making a mockery of His Divinity?

What shall we say of those whose guilt pourtrays itself in looks, and whose imagination is full of wicked thoughts, and desires of vengeance, before the God of purity and love?

There are others, alas! who dispute about precedence in our churches, and that in the presence of a God, who is hidden under species sometimes well-nigh imperceptible. Let us examine these things, reader; see if you have not fallen into one or many of these sins; see especially if you have not talked during Holy Mass on Sundays, or Feasts of Obligation; for if you have thus acted during a considerable time, so as to lose the Mass, it is a mortal sin; if you have excited others to do likewise, you have committed as many sins as there are persons who have sinned.

Reflect whether you have taken care that your servants and those over whom you have any control, have behaved with the modesty and respect that the holiness of our Churches demands. Saint Chrysostom goes still farther, and says, that not only *those who* talk and keep up a conversation in our

Churches, but even those who do not reprove them for it, deserve to be struck down by lightning.

The Son of God has given us notable examples of zeal for the House of God. He was the very pattern of meekness, but when He saw men profaning His Father's House He not only rebuked them, but, making a scourge, he drove ignominiously out of the Temple all who dishonoured it. Then His disciples began to remember what was written: "The zeal of the House of the Lord hath eaten me up."

What effect has this holy zeal produced in us? Where are the persons we have warned? Where are those we have corrected?

But this zeal is rare enough amongst Christians, who, in the Day of Judgment, will be condemned even by infidels. Yes, the Turks will rise up against us and ask justice for our impiety; for they hardly dare to move in their temples and do not permit any one, if he be riding, to pass the door of their temple without dismounting, even though it be in a public thoroughfare. Many of them have even put out their eyes after seeing the tomb of their false prophet, Mahomet, considering, that after such a sight, there was nothing on earth worth looking at. What shame and disgrace to Christianity, since we are so very far from shewing such respect!

We have only to enter churches where the sermon *is about to begin*; what noise, what talking, what

presumptuous and unseemly bearing! Still more, even when Jesus is exposed in the most Holy Sacrament, people keep up an ordinary conversation and behave with the greatest irreverence, to the great astonishment of the Angels who are present. How strange is the hardness of the human heart! Even on the very days when we ought to be more sensibly affected, the Wednesday and Thursday in Holy Week, and on that day when the sufferings of our crucified Lord are commemorated, our Churches are more than ever profaned by the curiosity of the people going to hear the singing or the music. Woe, says the prophet, to those who enter the House of the Lord with pomp and show! *Væ qui pompaticé ingrediuntur domum Domini.* Still greater woe be to those who behave irreverently in it. O Christian soul, never enter into the sacred precincts, except with holy fear and confusion, weeping bitterly for your sins, and asking graces of the God of mercy with deep humility.

SIXTH PRACTICE.

TO HAVE A CARE FOR EXTERIOR THINGS WHICH CONCERN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT, SUCH AS CHURCHES, ORNAMENTS, TABERNACLES, CHALICES, CIBORIUMS, AND OTHER THINGS.

WHO will give us grace to be once for all delivered from our darkness? Who will give us a little ray of the admirable light of which the Prince of the Apostles speaks, so that we may regard everything

according to that light, and no longer by our own base and deceitful light?

This is the grace given to him who fears God, and which makes him neglect nothing in His service; the smallest things that concern our Lord's worship are very great in his eyes. This is easily to be remarked in the conduct of Holy Church, who has no other guide but the Holy Spirit. She shows great honour for all that concerns her Divine Spouse, and amongst the different orders that are established in her, we may consider in those of Porter and Acolyte—the high esteem in which she holds the lowest things used in the service of God The Porter has to open and shut the doors of the church, ring the bells, take care of the Sacristy, vest the altars, and expel from the church all who behave irreverently. The Acolyte has to light the candles, prepare the fire for the incense, carry the candlesticks, prepare the wine and water in the cruets, and serve the Mass in surplice. To the Sub-deacon in like manner is entrusted the function of washing the palls and corporals, of touching the sacred vessels and keeping them in order, and placing on the altar as many particles as are required for those who desire to communicate.

Thus the Church esteems all that regards the worship of her Spouse, and that sacred Spouse has left us a good example of this zeal, in not permitting any vessel to be carried through His Temple.

The souls who fear God, neglect nothing. This has induced even Bishops to cleanse the Church, and it is well known that the Emperor Constantine removed on his royal shoulders, twelve dorsels of earth at the digging of the foundations of St. Peter's Basilica. The Blessed Maurice, a Dominican, with admirable devotion, went from door to door, begging oil for the church lamps, and he met with princes who thought themselves happy in being allowed to trim them.

Blessed Victorine, foundress of the Celestial Order, spun with special care the linen for the corporals, and Blessed Cecilia of the Third Order of Minims rejoiced to be allowed to wash the church linen.

This is what the Saints have done, this is what those do who love and fear the Lord. But is it what we do? How many Churches are left desolate whilst we are continually building houses on all sides for miserable creatures! How many churches where the adorable Body of Jesus cannot repose with the respect due to It, whilst insignificant men are lodged with comfort in pleasant and ornamented habitations! Such is the reception He meets with on this earth wherein He vouchsafes to dwell; it is thus He has been treated by us. All things must more and more convince us, that, to the world, our Jesus is an unknown and hidden God.

O my Lord! I feel my soul deeply touched, my *heart is* greatly affected at this. What! Is it pos-

sible that Thy creatures treat Thee so shamefully? I have seen churches and parishes where I was told they had not the means of providing suitable and trifling necessaries for the altar. Can we possibly believe that it is difficult to procure the sacred vessels? We can find money to spend on our own attire, but sometimes not a small sum for a tabernacle for the dwelling of the Son of God. What words are these I hear? "I am not obliged to get it;" they fill me with fear. Is it then to be said, that we shall not feel obliged to our God, to our Creator, to our Saviour, to our King, to our All? Think of what you do, not only for princes, in contributing to what they exact from you, but still more, what do you do for yourself, for your own body, and then blush in the presence of God and His Angels, blush at your ingratitude, worthier of the denizens of hell than of a creature in whom some rays of light remain.

After reflecting on this, I leave you to consider what you intend to do, and before concluding this Practice, think awhile on the respect you owe to those who serve at the sacred altar. You know that the great St. Martin desired that his deacon might be served at table before the Emperor. You are not ignorant that there have been monarchs who would not go into the Choir, the place of the priests, owing to the great respect they felt for the priestly office. The great St. Charles Borromeo would never permit the viceroy to enter the chancel of his cathe-

dral, and when he was asked what he would have done had the King of Spain gone there, he replied, that his majesty, being a Catholic, would have acted according to the commands of the Church, and that he would not have occupied the seat of the Priests, to whom (as the eloquent St. Chrysostom says) not only men are obedient, but God Himself, who is willing to subject Himself to the power He has given them, as He did of old, to the most Blessed Virgin and her virginal spouse, St. Joseph.

M. de Renty, whose life is a perfect model of a true Christian, was one day receiving several visitors of distinction, and remarking that a Priest, their chaplain, was standing aloof in a corner, he immediately left all his company and went and entered into conversation with him, to the great astonishment of his guests who were not accustomed to see such marks of respect. He once asked God's pardon because he had, against his will, taken precedence of a priest, in walking before him. He always ordered missionaries to be served at table with silver dishes, so highly did he esteem the office they held.

Saints have been seen to kiss the ground where priests have passed; and let us ask ourselves what we do to these anointed of the Lord. A rich citizen will often treat his pastor in a shameful way, and priests who instruct children are treated like *valets.* If the master and mistress of a house are *great people,* they will hardly give them a place at

their table; others will give them the worst places; even the pupils are allowed to take precedence of them; we are told that people have devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament, and yet this is the way they behave to those whose office it is to dispense the holy mysteries.

SEVENTH PRACTICE.

TO PREPARE CHILDREN WITH GREAT CARE FOR THEIR FIRST COMMUNION.

Qui pascitur inter lilia. Who feedeth among the lilies.—(Canticles ii. 16.)

GOD is holy, and He is holiness itself. Being Himself infinite, ineffable, incomprehensible, His Sanctity also is infinite, ineffable and incomprehensible. His Holiness is essential, dependent on no other, for all holiness depends on Him who is Holiness itself. He is the Object of all holiness. He is the Root and Source thereof, the Principle and the Cause. He alone is holy, He alone is good and perfect, because He alone is so by His own essence. All holiness of creatures is as nothing in His sight, though it were the sanctity of all the celestial choirs, or of the Holy Virgin herself. For between the purity of the heavenly intelligences and of their Queen, and the Sanctity of the God of all Holiness, there is an infinite distance.

It is this which makes Christians hide their faces with holy shame, before His infinite purity. It is

this which causes the astonishment of the seraphim, and which makes them sing that eternal canticle: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts!"

Oh! Is it not true that this Lord has infinite mercy for His creatures in wishing to communicate Himself to them, with such a profusion of love, not only of His graces, but of Himself? He came from heaven to converse with us; He, as it were, annihilates Himself, that we might have all; and if the heavenly intelligences continually admire His greatness, doubtless they are not astonished the less at His voluntary abasement.

What will creatures do, knowing these striking truths? God is the Holy of Holies, and He wishes to dwell in our hearts; but what resemblance is there between light and darkness? I now begin to understand why He wills that because He is holy we should be holy: why it is that of all His divine perfections, adorably equal, the Angels worship His holiness with a special adoration. It is because He would take up his abode and dwell within us, after He has been received by us. But for this indwelling, He must find souls pure and spotless. They must imitate Him in that perfection which He holds so dear. Oh! what a way to receive Him, Who is purity itself, with unclean lips and a mouth infected with sin! If He reproached the sinner spoken of by the psalmist, for his temerity in speaking of Him, what will He do to him who receives *Him into* a sinful heart? This is why the Holy

Spirit assures us that those who fear God, will prepare their hearts and sanctify their souls in His Divine Presence. *Qui timent præparabunt corda sua, et in conspectu illius sanctificabunt animas suas.*

It concerns His glory, since He wishes to establish His dwelling amongst us. Zeal for His interests ought not only to constrain us to give up our hearts to Him, but also to win for Him those of others, in order that He may be welcomed by all.

And whereas He never dwells with so much pleasure as amongst the lilies of innocence—*Qui pascitur inter lilia*—children ought to be watched with all possible care, to preserve their innocence and correct their imperfections, so that when Jesus comes into their hearts at their First Communion, He may find them pleasing in His sight. O fathers and mothers! bring lilies to our loving Jesus, when you bring your children to Holy Communion, having previously prepared them for it by instilling into their hearts a love of innocence and purity. O Priests of the Lord! prepare worthy dwellings for Him, by omitting nothing in your endeavours to guide and keep the souls of your penitents and your flock in the paths of holiness.

Wherever we look, we find reason for unspeakable confusion. Holy Scripture teaches us the extraordinary care that was bestowed upon the food and education of persons destined for the service of earthly princes, and we are insensible to the honour and glory of the God of Paradise, Who would have

His children worthily brought up, and fitted for His presence,—rendered seemly temples of His infinite Majesty! For this end we ought to give them good example, and not approve by our actions that which we forbid by our words. They will more readily imitate what they see done, than practise what they hear said. Our holy religion should often be brought before their minds, and while the maxims of a corrupt world are condemned, the precepts of the gospel should be held up for their veneration and esteem. Alas! how many fathers and mothers ruin their children by their conversation. Hearing nothing spoken of as desirable but earthly honours, pleasures, and riches, they wholly attach themselves to these perishable things. Children, therefore, should have good masters chosen for them, and such as lead a Christian life, and who have true zeal for the salvation of souls. They should be entrusted only to those who are filled with the Spirit of God, so that they may receive instruction conducive to their salvation. Above all, they should never be sent to schools where there is no separation of the sexes, for purity cannot be too rigidly watched over. The corruption of the world is greater than one can express, and they who are engaged in the care of souls, if they apply themselves zealously to their holy calling, know full well that the sin of impurity sends thousands to eternal ruin. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that, in education, the greatest care should

be taken to watch over the virtues of modesty and holy purity. Parents should keep their children from every occasion of sin, from the pomps and vanities of the world, which they renounced at holy baptism, and they should also be prevented from reading bad novels and other irreligious books. Parents ought also to be very careful in making their children go to confession frequently, particularly if they are in danger of death, even though they may not yet have attained their seventh year, for age should not be taken so much into consideration, as the use of reason, which, in the present day, is very precocious. We have read, and have every reason to believe it true, that God has punished very severely, children of five and six years of age, and experience shows us, that the greater number of children can discern good from evil, and have discretion sufficient to render them responsible for their actions. Therefore, when they are about to be instructed for their First Communion, they ought to be taken to some good Priest (if the pastor of the parish cannot undertake the care of them himself) to teach them the truths of this Divine Mystery, and prepare them for it by a general confession, which is very useful and very necessary for remedying many faults which often occur to young people in confessing; they should also be exhorted to do all the good actions of which they are capable.

It is surprising to think of the raging desire the

demons have, to deprive God of the first fruits of our works. These unhappy spirits have been forced, by the authority of the Church, to say, even against their inclination, that there are some of them who are deputed to prevent men from giving their first thoughts to God, on awaking in the morning. If this be so, we cannot doubt but they will make much greater efforts to introduce defects into the First Communions of children. Therefore, they who are zealous for the Most Holy Sacrament, ought to pray fervently, and employ all the means in their power to bring to nought the wiles of the devil, for the honour and glory of their Divine Master.

EIGHTH PRACTICE.

TO HAVE A HORROR OF IMPURITY AND HATRED, WHICH ARE TWO SINS SPECIALLY OPPOSED TO THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.

In malevolam animam non introibit sapientia, nec habitabit in corpore subdito peccatis. Wisdom will not enter into a malevolent soul, nor will she dwell in a body subject to sin.—(Wisdom i. 4.)

OUR loving Jesus, when on the point of enduring His most painful Death, desiring that all the faithful should be bound together in perfect union, by the close union they should have with Him, asks this favour of His Eternal Father, and in recompense for all He had done and endured until then: "*Father,*" says our dear Lord, "not only for these

[my disciples] do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me:" *Ut sint unum, sicut et nos unum sumus, ut sint consummati in unum:* that they may be all united in one, even as We are one. For this reason He instituted the Most Holy Sacrament, called by the Fathers, the "Sacrament of Union," the "Mystery of Peace." It is the Sacrament of Union, since it is by Him that we communicate one with another, being all united in Jesus Christ, who, in giving us His Body for Food, unites us by this means as closely to Himself, as the nourishment which people take, becomes a part of those who receive it, which is the most intimate union in nature: so that as Jesus Christ lives only by the life of His Father, the Christian who communicates should live only by the life of Jesus Christ.

Hence it is that this Sacrament is called the Communion: we are all united together, because we are all fed at the same Table, we all eat the same Bread, we all receive the same Spirit that ought to be in the faithful, as they ought all to have only that of the Adorable Jesus, Who is the Life of their souls. These truths clearly shew how much the sins of impurity and hatred are opposed to this Divine Sacrament. The great St. Chrysostom, reflecting on this Mystery of Peace, protests that, he who wishes to approach It, ought not to have the least aversion to his fellow-creatures in his heart: a truth verified by the Holy Spirit, who

is Truth itself, and who counsels us in the Gospel, if our brother has aught against us, to leave our gift on the altar, and go and be reconciled to him. Hence you will see how necessary it is to be in charity and union with our neighbour before we receive the Most Holy Communion. For could anything be more pressing than to oblige a person to leave his gift? Could not this Beloved Son of His Father have said: "Offer your gift, and then go and be reconciled?" But no, He wills that we be at peace and in union with our neighbour before He unites Himself to us.

Nor is this all; He not only requires that there should be no hatred in our heart against any one, but He wills that we should do our utmost, in order that our neighbour should have nothing wherewith to reproach us; that we should go and seek him out promptly, leaving, if necessary, even our devotions in order to be reconciled to him. Nay, though we on our part have no aversion to our dear neighbour, it suffices that he should have some reasonable cause for complaint against us, to impose upon us this obligation of seeking for a perfect reconciliation. It is too great an evil in the Christian religion that the members of the same Body should be divided; when, therefore, any one is in danger of this fatal division, all who are able should join in striving to prevent such a pernicious evil.

Saint Theresa, speaking to her daughters, said

to them, that if they met any one who was not living in charity, all the others ought to groan and weep for her. She protests that she would rather see the convent in flames than know that such sins were committed in it. The charitable Patriarch of Alexandria, St. John the Almoner, after consecrating the Divine Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, did not dare to communicate, remembering that a deacon who served him, had some animosity against him; so that, though he was officiating in the great Patriarchal Church before all the people, he left the Holy Altar and went into the sacristy to embrace the deacon, who was much astonished at such great charity; then the holy Prelate returned to the Altar with confidence, to finish the Holy Sacrifice.

They who are filled with the Spirit of God, will act in the same way. They practise what their Master commands them. They must either renounce Christianity, or renounce all hatred; they must either deny Jesus Christ, or love their enemies for the love of Jesus Christ, not only in not wishing any evil to them, but in giving them proofs of sincere friendship. St. Augustine says, this is not a counsel, but a most express command. *Dominus in Evangelio, ut inimicos diligere debeamus, non dedit consilium, sed præceptum.*—(St. Augustine 59, de Tempore.) It is a necessary part of the law of Christians, which is a law of love; "So that," says the learned Tertullian. "if you ask me to define a

Christian, I will tell you it is one who loves all, and hates none:" *Christianus nullius est hostis.*

Reader, here examine your conscience well, sound your heart, not lightly, but seriously, and with deep reflection. Ponder for a while on the state it is in with regard to your neighbour, for I declare to you from Almighty God, that if you see in it any hatred, and if you find not therein a disposition to love and oblige those who have offended you, that corrupt heart of yours is an enemy of the Most Holy Sacrament, and has conspired with the devil, against the honour and glory due to It. It is in the most pitiable state possible, and if a change be not wrought in it, all is lost.

The Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar is the Mystery of Peace, and cannot bear the slightest division; but is It not also the Sacrament of Purity? The Adorable King of Angels who dwells in It, is He not the Son of a Virgin, the Spouse of virgins, the Friend of virginity, the Author of all purity? What a delusion to imagine that the unclean, who shall never see God, can enter into that union with Him which He requires of the faithful in the Divine Eucharist; that impure flesh should be united to His Virginal and Most Pure Flesh! We are the temples of the Living God; but that Infinitely Holy God dwells only with holiness; His Spirit withdraws from the soul sunk in sensuality.

The soul that is animated with zeal for the Most Holy Sacrament, has a tender love of chastity; it

is her dearest virtue, it is full of holy and charming attractions that ravish her: such an one remembers that Oza was struck dead for only having touched the Ark, because he was defiled; she trembles at the sight of that chastisement, reflecting how pure one ought to be to approach the Most Holy Sacrament.

Therefore Christian women ought to avoid excessive luxury, and especially immodesty in dress. They should also be careful not to introduce, or even imitate, certain unsuitable fashions, which become an occasion of scandal, and which are disedifying to many souls redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Let everything in dress tell of modesty and simplicity. Is it not, indeed, a strange thing to see women approach Jesus, when by their fashionable dress, their movements and their looks, they seem to come into our churches only to be looked at and make themselves the rivals of their Creator, whilst Jesus dwells there to occupy all minds and all wills? I warn you, moreover, O ye women of the world, that, with the world you strive to please, you will soon pass away, and that the things you now seek after will not be able to help you in the Great Day of Judgment. In that terrible day of the Lord's vengeance, we shall hear you cry out to the mountains: "Fall upon us!" and to the hills, "Cover us," and hide beneath your ruins these wretched creatures who are utterly undone, because in life they sought only to attract to themselves the attention and admiration of men. In that day

many unhappy mothers will make the air re-echo in vain with their cries, at beholding their daughters, to whom they gave so bad an example, lost for ever through following in their footsteps, and prolonging, as it were, the sins of their mothers, even for long years after their death. The same misery is in store for all women who bring iniquity on a town, by introducing worldly and disedifying fashions. All these are far from adoring in spirit Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, since they declare such cruel war against Him.

NINTH PRACTICE.

TO PRAY OFTEN TO GOD THAT HE WILL GIVE GOOD PRIESTS TO HIS CHURCH, AND TO PREVENT, AS FAR AS LIES IN OUR POWER, THOSE WHO HAVE NO VOCATION FOR THAT DIVINE OFFICE FROM BEING BROUGHT INTO IT.

Rogate ergo Dominum messis, ut mittat operarios in messem suam. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He send labourers into His harvest. —(S. Luke x. 2.)

THE practice of which we speak is of so much the greater importance, as it has been inspired by Jesus Himself. "Pray," said the Good Shepherd, "pray the Lord that He send labourers into His vineyard;" as though He would say, "This is of more consequence than you think, and requires much intercession with Heaven in order to obtain the graces necessary for so great an object." But the soul that *has any* devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament ought

more particularly to pray for this end as it entirely concerns the honour and glory of this Adorable Mystery.

Take note that our Master commands prayers to be offered for good labourers, good Priests, whose office it is to work in His vineyard: first, because it is He only Who is to send them: secondly, because it is He only Who can give them the necessary dispositions for it. It belongs only to God to call men to the divine office of the priesthood. This is a truth strongly established in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the great Apostle speaking by the Spirit of God, clearly shews the necessity of vocation in these words: *Nec quisquam sumit sibi honorem:* "Neither doth any man take the honour (of the priesthood) to himself." Heb. v. 4. But not content with laying down these truths on his own Apostolic authority, he brings together the Old and New Testaments to render this truth more convincing, and so to leave in men's minds no doubt on the subject. He points out the example of the High Priest of the Jewish Church, and then that of our Lord Himself: *Sic et Christus non semetipsum clarificavit ut pontifex fieret.* "So Christ also did not glorify Himself that He might be made a High Priest." Heb. v. 5.

After this, I know not what those persons can reply, who have taken the tonsure so hastily, without considering what God requires of them, without deeply considering their vocation, and without obtaining the advice of pious, enlightened persons.

who are filled with the Holy Spirit. In like manner some have taken, without consideration, both Minor and Sacred Orders, and at last, the Priesthood itself. If they say, they knew not the importance of it, I answer that this is their greatest condemnation, seeing they *ought* to have known. For even Jesus did not appoint Himself to this divine office, but waited till His Father called Him, and yet men have the boldness to do otherwise! Is it not carrying presumption to the extreme? Truly such rashness and temerity deserve severe punishment. You who are priests, examine yourselves here, as to whether you have waited for a call from God, before taking Holy Orders; if you have not done so, tremble, weep, and do penance; seek out holy men of God, to know what you ought to do in a path so slippery, for you are running a very evident risk of falling into the precipice of eternal damnation. If you have not already been admitted into Holy Orders, wait patiently and consider well what you are going to do; for on it depends either your eternal happiness or misery. Do not listen to your relations, nor to your worldly friends; do not listen to nature, think not of your ease or advantage, think only of God and His Glory.

Is the reader of these words of the number of those who advise haste in entering the ecclesiastical state? If so, reflect whether you have been the means of *introducing* some one into Holy Orders. Have you co-*operated* in such a thing by your counsel? Have you

used your authority, or that of your friends, to get others received into the sublime office, without considering whether God has called them or not? You who advise, who recommend and make your children aspire with such levity to the priesthood, are you wiser than Jesus Christ? For though the person you recommend may have led a good life, be very talented, very pure; do you think that suffices? Was not Jesus chaste, holy, and full of wisdom? Are you holier, or more enlightened, more zealous for His Father's glory? O terrible truth, and which ought to be understood by every man! He calls not Himself, but waits till His Father calls Him.

No, unless the Lord build the house, their labour is in vain who build it. It belongs only to the Lord, says the Holy Spirit, to fix the destiny of man. It is for God to appoint the state that He pleases: it is not for us to choose. It is not for father, nor mother, nor relatives, nor for our masters, nor even for ourselves to make the choice; it is God only Who can and does.

If I am told that unless a certain young man aspires to the ecclesiastical state, he cannot live according to his position, well, let him be poor; I repeat it, let him be poor; and if people answer that it is very easy to say so, but very difficult to put it in practice, I reply, that it is more dreadful to be eternally ruined. I hear people in the world say, that *men* can be saved, whatever their position may

be, and consequently in the ecclesiastical state, and it is true; but God must call them to it. Will God give His grace to men to enable them to do their duty in a state to which they have not been called by Him, or into which they enter against His will? Tell me, you who say such things, would you give wages to people, who, in spite of your wishes, thrust themselves into your houses, to be your servants?

There must, therefore, be a real vocation, a call from God. Secondly, there must be seen in the person called a faithful correspondence, in his habits and manners, to the holy state in which God wishes to place him. *Sic nobis decebat Pontifex sanctus, innocens, impollutus, segregatus a peccatoribus.*

For he who aspires to the priesthood must be conformed to Jesus Christ, not only in his vocation, but also in his disposition; he must lead a pure and innocent life, like unto that of the Son of God. This makes the great Apostle say, when speaking of the qualities necessary to the priesthood, that they ought to be without sin, irreproachable. This is what made the holy Fathers say, that it is necessary to have led a life free from all mortal sin, to be promoted to Holy Orders. But now that the Church is not so rigorous, it is at least necessary that a man should have true contrition.

Then again, men must be learned. Do what you will, says St. Jerome, innocence without doctrine is not sufficient for a priest. *Ubi sunt qui innocentiam sacerdoti dicunt posse sufficere?* (Epist. ad

Fabiolam.) Where these three things are wanting, vocation, purity of life, and knowledge, disorder and scandal of all sorts are produced in the Church. Ask then of our Lord, O souls who have devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament, that He will not permit any to take upon themselves the sacred and august office, but men chosen by Himself, such as have sufficient knowledge, and whose saintly and exemplary lives fit them for it, so that by the Holy Sacrifice and daily Communion, they may worthily glorify His Sovereign Majesty. A layman who is leading a bad life would not ordinarily approach the Holy Communion: if he should do so at Easter, to avoid the blame of men, it would be only once a year, so that in fifty years, he would only communicate fifty times. But a Priest, if he be in sin, would make as many bad Communions as there are days in the year: he would profane the Holy Sacrament oftener in two months than a layman would during his life. Judge then, how many sacrilegious Communions would be made during ten, twenty, or thirty years. Think also of a wicked priest celebrating the Divine Mysteries, and then reflect on the profanation of which you have been the cause, without naming scandals and other evils, if such priests have been induced by your advice, and perhaps by your importunity, to enter on the holy ministry. Whoever you are, think of the account you will have to give to God, for having assisted towards

this guilt, in case you had reason to expect such deplorable results.

The celebrated and apostolical preacher, John d'Avila, remarks in an epistle to a young man, in which he dissuades him from his intention of becoming a priest, that the devil gives great inclinations to many towards the priesthood. *Crede mihi, charissme, non alius a cacodæmone, tanta et tam enormi audaciâ corda plurimorum hominum hujus seculi incitavit ad acquirendum Sacerdotis honorem.* (Epist. p. i. ep. 61.) It is the evil spirit, who, owing to his rage against the Most Holy Sacrament, when he sees a young man whom God does not call to the ecclesiastical state, tries to persuade him to choose that sacred office, and even instils into him an affection for it, so that having entered it only through the promptings of nature, he is guilty of the sins of which we have spoken.

I heartily beseech all charitable persons to reflect well on these sentiments of that great servant of God, John d'Avila, and to remember, that if they have the intention of helping, by their means or in any other way, those who wish to enter on the sacred functions of the Priesthood, they ought to have them examined beforehand by men who have the science of the Saints; for it would often be much better to have them taught some trade, than make them risk their salvation and expose the Sacred Body of the Son of God to the profanation which is likely to happen to It. In fact, my flesh

and blood is pierced with the fear of the Lord, when I reflect that I, who write these words, am a Priest. O greatness of God! what a dignity, what an office! If we are not on our guard, what misery is there not prepared for us!

This drew those tender words from the loving heart of the great St. Francis of Sales, "To love or to die." More than this, life without love is worse than death. Die then, and love; let us die to all love of creatures, and of ourselves, to live for the love of Jesus. This is the conclusion which the great Apostle draws in these words, "The love of Jesus Christ constrains us," and it shall be our conclusion also, O Christian souls. Let those who live, live no longer for themselves, but for God only. Let our lives be no longer our own, let us no longer live for ourselves, but for God alone; not in ourselves, but in Jesus only. If you ask me how much we should love the all-loving Jesus, how much we should love infinite Love, St. Leo teaches us that love proceeding from God, it ought to have no bounds, since the Divinity has neither end nor limit. *Si dilectio Deus est, nullum debet habere terminum charitas; quia nullo potest claudi fine Divinitas.* (St. Leo, sermon 39.) Let us, therefore, love with all our strength, let us love as much as we can, according to the extent of our grace, and let us be exceedingly ashamed, when we have done all that is in our power, to love so little and to have so little love.

The Blessed Etiennette, of the Order of Saint Dominic, saw, in an ecstasy, all the Saints and then all their love. She clearly discovered that they were far from loving God as much as He deserves. Whilst she was occupied in these reflections, it seemed to her that a great curtain was drawn aside,

and then was shewn to her an Abyss of Love, which no one ever loved enough; but the sight of these excellences, weighing heavily on her heart, drew these words from her:

"Ah! let me love Him, or I shall die."

"My daughter," said our Lord, "to love Him as much as He should be loved, is impossible to creatures. All the Angels and all men are finite; but console yourself in the love I bear to Myself."

Let us say, then, that we are useless servants, even when, as it seems to us, we have loved much; let us take care of uttering those horrible words that deserve to be held in execration by all souls who love. I will love God to a certain degree, I will keep His commandments, but as to loving Him to excess, as the Saints did, I cannot think of it. Saint Macarius the elder, in one of his Homilies, relates that which must be understood as allegorical, rather than as having really happened. That great servant of God says that there are certain sheep that live on mountains, which continually throw out fire and emit flames on all sides, and that these sheep have no other food but these fires. If their wool gets soiled, it is cleansed, and becomes beautiful in the flames; but if the animals are taken from those mountains, they die immediately, as they can only live on fire and in the fire. Speaking of this, he exclaims, "It is thus that Christians ought to live; they should feed on nothing but the heavenly fire that Jesus came to bring on earth;

the Holy Spirit Who loves them, is a Spirit of fire; it is in this way that He appeared on the day He descended on the most holy Mary and the Apostles. It is in the fire of divine love that they ought to wash and purify themselves; it is in this they ought to sanctify themselves. This fire ought to feed them and lead them on to perfection. It is their breath, it is their life, they cannot go away from it without dying, without being choked by evil spirits. *Qui non amat Jesum, sit anathema.* Let therefore that soul and that heart which love not Jesus be anathema.

It is very just, as the great lover of the Son of God, St. Augustine, teaches, that he who will not burn with heavenly fire in this life, should burn for ever in the fire of hell. There is no place for him in heaven, where only the lovers of Jesus are; neither is there a place for him in the air, nor in the sea, nor on earth, where the birds, the fishes, the animals, however cold they may be, serve and love God in their own way. Grant then, O my Lord, that my soul may love Thee, and that it may be all transformed into Thy pure love; O my God, let me be all consumed, all lost in the abyss of Thy love, and in love to the Most Holy Sacrament.

O Christian souls, here He dwelleth who was the Desire of the Eternal Hills; here is the Beloved Son of the Eternal Father, He in whom He is well *pleased;* here is the Prince of the Seraphim, the

Great God of Eternity, He who has been the object of the sighs and the desires of the patriarchs and prophets. Abraham desired to see the happy day that we have seen. The prophets trembled with joy and embraced each other with love, in the dim knowledge they had of the great light with which we are surrounded.

O men, what can you feel at this thought? Angels of Heaven, come in crowds to witness the spectacle of love that the eyes of men behold on earth! Every day, wretch that I am, the lowest and most ungrateful of men, I hold in my hands Him who is the joy of the blessed, my lips touch Him, I receive Him into my breast. O Love! O Love! what art Thou doing? Why dost Thou thus forget Thy Greatness? Tell me, Angels of Heaven, did you not think, when you saw your Sovereign consume Himself with love in the Divine Eucharist, that all men, after such a favour, would die from nothing else but love? Were you not strangely astonished when you perceived the contrary?

O my heart, listen again to these truths and die of sorrow, if your sins prevent you dying of pure love! St. John the Baptist never received such caresses as those which our God lavishes on us in the Most Holy Sacrament, and he lived only on love. St. Theresa was pierced with a fiery dart by a Seraph, and from that time all her actions were animated by love. History informs us that one

day the Most Blessed Virgin appeared to a very pure and innocent girl, holding her Divine Child in her arms. The infant Jesus asked her if she loved Him. O my Lord, she replied, bathed in tears, I love Thee with all my heart. What! answered the Divine Child, do you not love Me even more than your own heart? At these words her heart burst, and she died of love.

O my heart, the Seraph who wounded St. Theresa with love is only a creature; the child who appeared to the young girl was only a vision, representing the Person of Jesus; but in the Divine Eucharist, it is Jesus Himself Whom we have so often received, and Whom we can receive every day.

Enlarge thyself, O my heart, and burst with love. Let us die of love; let us lose ourselves for ever, drowned in the abyss of love. Holy Seraphim, inflame us with your love! Incomparable Queen of pure love, consume us in thy flames, that we may be the victims of Love Itself, the Great and Divine King Jesus, in the Most Holy Sacrament.

Let every one do as he will, but as long as my memory lasts, I will think of the love of God; while I have a heart, I will love Him; as long as I have a tongue, I will preach about Him. I will proclaim everywhere the admirable love of Jesus; I will cry aloud to all men; I will lose no opportunity of saying to them that they must no longer live, but for the love of God only, so that when *they die,* it may be in the purity of that love.

I will finish all my sermons, as the great St. Ignatius did, by urging all men to give themselves up to love, but it must be for the love of God only, as that suffices. Let us, then, conclude thus: God alone, God alone, God alone, and it is inexpressibly sweet to repeat it, God alone, God alone, always God alone! In life, in death, and after death!

INSTRUCTION AND PRAYERS FOR THE ADORATION OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.*

THE hour during adoration may be employed either in vocal or mental prayer, but it would be better to speak more with the heart than with the lips, in honour of this Divine Mystery, where Jesus is present in so spiritual a manner, and where He wishes to be adored in spirit. Here is a way in which this may be done.

We must open the eyes of faith to place ourselves in the presence of Jesus Christ, adore Him profoundly, and say the following prayers to Him, pausing a little between each sentence, to enable us to comprehend and inwardly taste what is contained therein, as well as to make interior acts, and apply them seriously to ourselves.

* These instructions and prayers are taken from the Rules of the Confraternity of the Adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament, instituted in the Holy Chapel, at Dijon, before the Revolution, 1793. They may be used by pious persons, either on the day the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, or during special visits to our Lord.

My adorable Saviour, Jesus Christ, true God and true man, I firmly believe that Thou art present under the veil of the sacramental species ; I believe it with more certainty than if I beheld Thee, because my senses and my reason may deceive me, but Thy word, which assures me of it, is infallible; Lord, increase my faith.

I adore Thee, as my Sovereign Lord, with all the strength of my soul, with all the respect I can possibly feel, and with all joy at being dependent on Thee as Thy creature and Thy slave, redeemed by the infinite price of Thy Blood, and Thy Death. As such, I render Thee my homage. (*Say this from the depths of your heart.*)

Lord, since Thou hast the goodness to dwell amongst us, I should be very ungrateful, and the enemy of my own happiness, were I to refuse the honour Thou bestowest upon me, in bearing with my visits, and affording me interviews with Thy majesty. (*Those who are in the habit of paying many worldly visits, ought here to be confounded with shame, at having preferred them to these visits with the Spouse, and should ask pardon.*)

I confess, O my God, that my iniquities have kept me far from Thee, and that I deserve to be chased from Thy presence. I should not be rash enough to present myself before Thee, did I not hear Thy gentle Voice calling unto Thee all that are wretched, saying : *Come unto Me, all ye that are burdened, and I will comfort you.*

I come then, Lord, depending on those words: I take courage in the faithfulness of Thy promises; I come to throw myself at Thy feet, as a most sure refuge, where I hope to find the assurance of my salvation, and the forgiveness of my sins. (*Make this act of Hope with sincerity, and say:* "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.")

I return, O Lord, to protest to Thee again, and once for all, my fidelity in Thy service; I come here to renew the alliance I have had the honour to contract with Thee in my Baptism, and which I have so many times broken by my rebellion against Thee. Invisible God, Whom I adore under the Sacramental Veil, I swear eternal fidelity to Thee. Receive my declaration, accept the resolution which comes from the depths of my heart. Until now, I have been insensible to all Thy interests, but I begin to be touched at the insults that are offered Thee in Thy dread Sacrament, all the sacrileges committed by heretics, all the irreverence and indignity committed by Catholics in our Churches, during Holy Mass, at Communion, and at the foot of Thine Altars. (*Call to mind what you have done in this respect.*) O Lord, wilt Thou always be the object of man's insolent malice? Dost Thou dwell amongst us only to be outraged? (*Let your heart be moved to devout affections.*)

Lord, I come to Thee to show my sorrow and my regret; I come to make an act of reparation to Thee on my knees, with hands joined and face

bowed down, mine eyes bathed in tears; I offer this reparation to Thee, O Lord, for myself, and for all those who have fallen into the terrible crime of high treason to Thy Divine Majesty. (*Place yourself before our Lord with the confusion of a criminal who seeks pardon, and tell him you are willing to do penance.*)

Open our eyes, Divine Love, and change our hearts; make us feel deeply the horror of this treachery; touch the hearts of Catholics, and undeceive heretics. It would seem as if they were less guilty than we, because they know Thee not, neither believe Thee to be present in this Sacrament. But we, with our faith, do not scruple to maltreat Thee in this mystery, where we *know* Thee to be really present. (*Ponder this deeply.*)

O my God, my heavenly King! why have I not as much respect and love for this adorable mystery, as heretics have horror and aversion for it? Why have I not as much zeal in glorifying Thee, as they have rage and fury in their persecution of Thee? Why have I not the means of rebuilding all the Churches they have overthrown, restoring all the Altars they have destroyed, and making reparation for all the sacrilege they continue to commit? (*If this were in your power, would you endeavour to do it?*)

Why cannot I prevent all the profanation, and why am I unable to be the means of Thy being honoured more and more by all the nations of the

earth? (*See what you can and will do to this end, and offer your desires to Jesus Christ.*)

I resolve, O my God, with the aid of Thy grace, to do all in my power as long as I live, to promote the honour of the Most Holy Sacrament. My communions shall be more devout; I will assist at Holy Mass with more attention and more respect; I will instruct all under my charge therein; I will respect Thy Priests and Thine Altars; I will take care to come and adore Thee in this Sacrament, especially at solemn Exposition; I will assist as often as I am able in following Thee when Thou art carried to the sick; I will take care to receive Thee in good time, or cause Thee to be received, as Viaticum, whenever it is in my power (*Sound your heart, as to whether you are quite resolved to do all this. You must promise only what you are determined to fulfil.*)

O my Saviour and my God! As I am uncertain whether, when I leave the world, I shall be summoned suddenly, and not have time to ask for Thee, as Viaticum, I ask Thee now, as my Love and my All! I beseech Thee, by the bowels of Thy mercy, not to deprive me of that honour and that help at the hour of death. Amen.

CROWN

OF TWENTY-FOUR ADORATIONS, IN HONOUR OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT, TO MAKE REPARATION FOR THE INSULTS OFFERED TO IT DURING THE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OF THE DAY AND NIGHT.

1. I ADORE Thee, *O Hidden God*, and I acknowledge Thee worthy of all honour. In reparation for all the impiety committed in Thy Sacred Presence, I offer Thee the adoration of the Most Blessed Virgin, Thy Mother, at the first moment of Thy conception in her chaste womb, and I pray Thee to give me grace to be able to sing with her in eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

2. I adore Thee, *O Incarnate God*, and I acknowledge Thee to be infinitely worthy of our love. In reparation for all the irreverence committed in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the respect of all the Angels and Archangels, with whom I hope to sing to all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

3. I adore Thee, *Jesus, my Sweet Saviour*, and I acknowledge Thee to be essentially eternal. In reparation for the blasphemy uttered in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the praises of all the choirs of the Principalities, with whom I hope to sing to all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

4. I adore Thee, *Sovereign Lord of the Universe*, and I acknowledge Thee to be independent of all others. In reparation for my want of devotion towards Thee, I offer Thee the pious affections of the Dominations, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

5. I adore Thee, *True King of my heart*, and I acknowledge Thee alone to be a King from everlasting to everlasting. In reparation for all the sins of anger committed in Thy Sacred Presence, I offer Thee the zeal of all the Thrones, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

6. I adore Thee, *Vigilant Pastor of my soul*, and I acknowledge Thee to be infinitely good and loving. In reparation for all the culpable ignorance which leads us to offend Thee daily, I offer Thee the knowledge of the Cherubim, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

7. I adore Thee, the *Only Spouse of my soul*, and I acknowledge Thee to be truly faithful. In reparation for all the tepidity and cowardice committed in Thy presence, I offer Thee the ardour of the Seraphim, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

8. I adore Thee, in the Sacred Host, *my Most Sincere and Cordial Friend*, and I acknowledge Thee

alone to be Immortal and Unchangeable in Thy Divine Nature. In reparation for the despair yielded to in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the hope of all the holy Patriarchs, with whom I desire to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

9. I adore Thee, my *Most Loving Father*, and I acknowledge Thee the source of all my being. In reparation for all the errors entertained against Thee, I offer Thee the faith of all the Apostles, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

10. I adore Thee, my *Most Just Judge*, and I acknowledge Thee to be Infinitely Merciful. In reparation for all the doubts that are conceived regarding Thy Real Presence in the Most Holy Sacrament, I offer Thee the steadfastness of the Evangelists, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

11. I adore Thee, *Loving Shepherd of my soul*, and I acknowledge Thee to be Infinite Wisdom. In reparation for the plans and desires of vengeance entertained in Thy Sacred Presence, I offer Thee the patience of the Martyrs, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

12. I adore Thee, *O Mighty Advocate*, and I acknowledge Thee to be Infinitely Powerful. In reparation for the negligences committed in Thy

Presence, I offer Thee the zeal for souls manifested by all holy Bishops, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

13. I adore Thee, *Most Sacred Host*, and I acknowledge Thee to be the Fountain of all the innumerable graces and blessings that flow into my soul. In reparation for all the thefts that have been committed in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the alms that have been given by all the holy Popes, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

14. I adore Thee, my *Worthy and Incomparable Master*, and I acknowledge Thee to be a God of Infinite Goodness. In reparation for all the scandals committed in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the zeal of all holy Preachers, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

15. I adore Thee, *True Author and Preserver of my life*, and I acknowledge Thee to be Infinitely Glorious. In reparation for the sacrilege committed in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the devotion of all the holy Confessors, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

16. I adore Thee, *True Eucharistic Bread*, and I acknowledge Thee to be sweeter than all the joys of earth. In reparation for all oaths and impreca-

tions in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the holy words spoken to Thy glory by the holy Doctors of the Church, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

17. I adore Thee, *Divine and Heavenly Food*, and I acknowledge Thee to be more delightful than all earthly banquets. In reparation for all the excesses committed in Thy Presence, I offer thee the sobriety of the holy Anchorites, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

18. I adore Thee, *Divine Host of Propitiation*, and I acknowledge Thee to be more Liberal and Magnanimous than all men. In reparation for the mockeries against Thy Priests, I offer Thee the homage rendered Thee by all holy Religious, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

19. I adore Thee, *O Precious and Salutary Antidote*, and I acknowledge Thee Infinitely Powerful to take away sin. In reparation for all the distractions that souls have yielded to in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the ecstasies and raptures of all the holy Hermits, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

20. I adore Thee, *Holy and Eternal Priest*, and I acknowledge Thee worthy of all the homage of

men. In reparation for the insults offered to Thy Virgins, I offer Thee the love of all holy Virgins, with whom I hope to sing for ever: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

21. I adore Thee, *Incomparable Priest and Victim*, and I acknowledge Thee to be more worthy of honour than all the Priests that have preceded Thee. In reparation for the unbecoming actions committed in Thy Presence during Holy Mass, I offer Thee the love and respect of all holy Widows, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

22. I adore thee, *Unquenchable Fire*, and I acknowledge Thy Power to consume all hearts with the flames of Thy Love. In reparation for the impurity committed in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the purity of all holy Women, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

23. I adore Thee, *my God and my dear Redeemer*, and I acknowledge Thee to be the Saviour of all men. In reparation for all the evil thoughts conceived in Thy Presence, I offer Thee the unceasing thought of Thee enjoyed by the Blessed in Heaven, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

24. I adore Thee, *Divine* Word, Hidden in the

Sacred Host, and I acknowledge Thee alone worthy to be the object of my love. In reparation for all the ingratitude committed in Thy Sacred Presence, I offer Thee the gratitude rendered to Thee by the glorious Virgin Mary, with whom I hope to sing for all eternity: *Blessed and praised for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*

METHOD.

OF ASSISTING AT THE PROCESSION OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

WHEN present in Church at the Procession of the Most Blessed Sacrament, and while the Priests are making preparations for this august ceremony, you can invoke the Holy Spirit by reciting the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, adding to it the prayer of the Most Holy Sacrament, and then beseech the Blessed Virgin to offer you to her Adorable Son. To do this well, you should also pray to your Guardian Angel, to obtain for you the same reverence and devotion as he has himself in presence of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

When you begin to adore this Divine Sacrament, think first that it is with the intention of making reparation to Jesus Christ for all the affronts He has received during His Passion, that you and all the faithful are about to assist at this most august and triumphant ceremony.

With this intention, join with the whole Church

in saying: *O Salutaris Hostia,* &c. When the officiating Priest puts the Sacred Host into the Monstrance, whilst all the faithful are kneeling to adore It with respect and humility, think that it is to make amends for the insults, the outrages, and the violence with which our Lord was taken captive by the sacrilegious hands of the soldiers in the dusk of evening.

Leave your place in the Church, and if possible follow the procession with these thoughts; ask pardon of our Lord for all the insults and ill-treatment that He then received. With this intention, recite the hymn, *Pange Lingua, gloriosi Corporis Mysterium.*

Keep these thoughts in your mind until you arrive at the first altar of repose. Tell Jesus Christ the joy you feel that, in reparation for His having been forsaken by all His friends and disciples at the time of His Passion, you see such a vast number of Christians accompanying Him and acknowledging Him as their God. Say to Him, with more fidelity and humility than St. Peter: "My God, though I should be called on to give my life to maintain truth against heresy, that Thy Body and Blood are in the Adorable Eucharist, I hope, with the help of Thy grace, that I shall never deny Thee." Offer Him in thanksgiving all the blood of the Martyrs, who gave blood for blood, body for body, and who died in defence of this adorable truth, in order that they might correspond with His *incomparable* charity.

Make some acts of faith in this mystery, and say several times, "O my God, I believe that Thou art Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, Who art come into the world."

On arriving at the first altar of repose, think of what passed at the house of Annas and Caiaphas, the outrages our Divine Saviour received, the insolent way He was spat upon, and the cruel blows struck on His Face by so many sacrilegious hands; protest with all your heart that you wish to make full reparation; close your eyes and hide your face in confusion, to make some amends for the infamous way in which the executioners blindfolded Him; acknowledge by an act of faith that in the Host are the same Sacred Eyes of Jesus Christ and the same Sacred Face which will be the everlasting joy of the Blessed and of Angels throughout eternity. Think of this while going to the second altar.

On arriving there, say the *Verbum supernum prodiens*, or some other appropriate hymn or prayer. If you know by heart the hymns the Priests are singing, they will be preferable to all others, and you must repeat them yourself with devotion and attention.

Think of the examination our Lord Jesus Christ underwent at the hands of Pilate, regarding His doctrine and His actions, of His being ignominiously sent by that same Pilate to Herod, and how *he* was sent back again still more ignominiously

from Herod to Pilate. Offer Him in reparation all the respect and adoration that are now rendered to Him throughout the universe by all Christians.

At the third altar of repose, you will call to mind how Jesus Christ was shamefully stripped of His garments, and scourged, how cruelly all His Body was bruised and torn at the Judgment-hall and elsewhere; offer Him in spirit and in reparation, for this, all the sicknesses and afflictions of body and mind that not only you yourself will suffer, but which all those may have to endure who assist at the procession. Ask the assistance of His grace for them and for yourself to enable you all to suffer with patience and resignation, as He did: then rejoice that, now our Divine Jesus is in Heaven, free from all suffering, immortal and glorious; acknowledge by an act of faith, that same immortality and that same glory which He possesses in the Eucharistic species. Continue to think of this as you go on; if you happen to look at the hangings and other ornaments with which the Way of Procession is decorated, let it be only with the intention of offering them to Jesus Christ: say the Psalm, *Domini est terra, et plenitudo ejus*, which is the 3rd of Our Lady's Matins.

At the fourth and last altar, reflect on the most painful crowning of thorns: offer to Jesus Christ, in reparation, all the flowers that were presented to Him at the preceding altars, and express your joy to Him that He has been crowned King of

Heaven and earth, of Angels and men, by the Hands of His Eternal Father. Gaze on Him earnestly, and reverence Him as the King of His Church, Who governs and will govern it by His Spirit, until the end of the world: then make your profession of fidelity to Him as His most humble subject; protest that you will always follow and serve Him, and repeat these protestations and promises until the procession has re-entered the Church. Ask pardon of Him for your past rebellious conduct, and all your irreverence; also for all the sacrileges that have ever been committed against His Divine Person in the Adorable Eucharist, either by heretics, or by bad Christians.

When in the Church, consider Jesus Christ replaced on the altar, as a King who has just ascended His throne, or judgment-seat, after a triumphal procession; think of that Cross of shame to which He was nailed on Mount Calvary; ask His pardon for all the blasphemy then poured forth against Him; offer Him, in reparation, all the praises that have been given Him during the procession; and as, whilst He was hanging on the Cross, the Jews vented their utmost hatred upon Him, beg of Him, for yourself and for all the faithful, the grace of deepest love for Him. Make an act of love, or some particular prayer, and hear Mass with this intention.

Before leaving the Church, thank our Lord Jesus

Christ for all these pious sentiments; ask Him the grace to be faithful to all the resolutions you have made; adore Him once more, and repeat the *Te Deum Laudamus*, &c. "*Blessed for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!*" *

PARAPHRASE

OF THE LITANY OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

Kyrie, Eleison. Lord, remember not Thy sovereignty, against which we have revolted so often, but remembering Thy mercies of old, have mercy on us.

Christe, Eleison. Jesus Christ, Who art the Judge of all the world, because Thou art truly God, Thy Name is a Name of sweetness, and Thou dost honour us in communicating it to us; have mercy on us.

Kyrie Eleison. Lord, shew us, by pardoning us, that we are not wrong in having confidence in Thee, and though we are unworthy, have mercy on us.

Christe, audi nos. Jesus Christ, Who sittest at the right hand of God, shew unto us that Thou deignest to hear our prayers; hear us, we beseech Thee.

Christe, exaudi nos. Jesus Christ, Thou both knowest our wants, and hast power to help us; do Thou have the will also, we beseech Thee.

* 100 days' Indulgence.

Pater de cœlis Deus, miserere nobis. Heavenly Father and our God, consider that we are Thy children, though rebellious against Thee, and have mercy on us.

Fili Redemptor mundi Deus. God the Son, Redeemer of the world, permit not those to perish whom Thou hast ransomed, but have mercy on us.

Spiritus Sancte Deus, miserere nobis. O God the Holy Spirit, Who hast made us Thy temples, by the consecration of our souls and bodies to Thee ; have mercy on us.

Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, miserere nobis. Holy Trinity, God in Three Persons, Whom no mind, either angelic or human, can comprehend ; have mercy on us.

Panus vivus qui de cœlo descendisti. O Living Bread, that camest down from Heaven to give us life, and a fuller life than we lost through the sin of Adam ; have mercy on us.

Deus absconditus et Salvator. God, hidden from our natural eyes, and visible only to the eye of faith ; but Who, from beneath the veil of the sacramental species, beholdest our miseries, and hast power to save us ; have mercy on us.

Frumentum Electorum. Wheat of the Elect, purge us of the old leaven, and make us worthy to be gathered into the garner, in the day when Thou shalt come to separate the wheat from the chaff ; have mercy on us.

Vinum germinans virgines. Wine, which quenchest

evil inclinations, which purifiest and strengthenest virgins, making them to grow as beautiful flowers in the garden of the Church; have mercy on us.

Panis pinguis et deliciæ regum. Bread, that nourishest those who eat thereof, and givest heavenly delights to kings; have mercy on us.

Ingens sacrificium. Perpetual Sacrifice, which hast happily succeeded to the imperfect sacrifices of the Old Law, and by which God shall be adored until the consummation of the world; have mercy on us.

Oblatio Munda. Pure Oblation, foretold by Malachi, that needest not to be purified by the ministers who offer Thee, but who art the Source of all their purity; have mercy on us.

Agnus absque macula. Lamb, without spot, immolated from the beginning of the world, worthy to reign over all creatures, and to receive glory and honour in heaven, on earth, and in hell; have mercy on us.

Mensa purissima. Most Pure Feast, prepared against all who persecute us; we are not worthy to present ourselves at Thee, but we still venture to seek that honour; have mercy on us.

Angelorum esca. Thou Food of Angels and Hidden Manna, Who hast a delightful sweetness, and preservest from death those who eat Thee; have mercy on us.

Memoria mirabilium Dei. Memorial of the wondrous works of God, containing in Thyself that

amazing gift which His love hath set forth for us upon the Cross; have mercy on us.

Panis supersubstantialis. Supersubstantial Bread, infinitely surpassing all other in strength and dignity, it is for Thee we ask, as our daily bread; have mercy on us.

Verbum caro factum. Word made Flesh, without ceasing to be God, emptied of Thy glory for us in the womb of Thy Mother and in this Sacrament; have mercy on us.

Verbum habitans in nobis. Word dwelling in us, Who not only delightest to converse with the children of men, and willest to be the Divine Emmanuel, God with us, but who dost enter into us, and unite us to Thy Sacred Flesh, so as, through Thyself, to unite us to God; have mercy on us.

Hostia Sancti. Sacred Host, who hast willed to be slain, to remedy the destruction sin has made in us; have mercy on us.

Calix Benedictionis. Chalice of Benediction, succeeding to the cup of anger and wrath which we have deserved to drink to the dregs; have mercy on us.

Mysterium Fidei. Mystery of Faith, we are content to be unable to comprehend Thee, and we believe in Thee more firmly than what we see with our outward sight, than what we touch with our hands, or that which our minds can conceive; have mercy on us.

Præcelsum et Venerabile Sacramentum. Most High and Most Venerable Sacrament, draw us out

of the vile state to which sin has reduced us, and since we cannot raise ourselves to God, do Thou abase Thyself even to us, and have mercy on us.

Sacrificium omnium sanctissimum. Most Holy of all sacrifices, Who dost sanctify all the sacrifices of the Old Law, being types of Thee; make us holy.

Verè propitiatorium pro vivis et defunctis. Propitiation for the living and the dead, do Thou appease the anger of God for the sins of the living, and obtain the deliverance of the departed; have mercy on us.

Cœleste Antidotum quo à peccatis præservamur. Heavenly Antidote, heal our miseries, and prevent our relapsing into them: strengthen our hearts against the poison of self-love, with which they are filled, and have mercy on us.

Stupendum miraculum super omnia miracula. Stupendous Miracle, above all other miracles, work one most worthy of Thee, by giving back to us the life we have lost by our sins; have mercy on us.

Sacratissima Dominicæ Passionis commemoratio. Most sacred Commemoration of the Passion of our Lord, imprint in us lively sentiments of the sufferings of Jesus, and give us a desire to participate in them.

Donum transcendens omnem plenitudinem. Gift transcending all fulness, since Thou containest all things, fill our emptiness, and have pity on our poverty.

Memoriale præcipuum divini amoris. Special Memorial of Divine Love, be always, not only before our eyes, but in the depths of our hearts, by a profound sentiment of gratitude.

Diviniæ affluentia largitatis. Fulness of Divine Bounty, Thou hast good reason to come to the aid of our poverty, for we stand in need of all things; have mercy on us.

Sacrosanctum et augustissimum Mysterium. Most Holy and Most August Mystery, we will reverence Thee with the most profound veneration; have mercy on us.

Pharmacum Immortalitatis. Medicine of Immortality, we deserve death, to which we are subject as our birthright, and we will endure it as a just punishment for sin. Accept it in expiation, and grant that our pains may become an agreeable sacrifice in the eyes of Thy majesty.

Tremendum ac vivificum Sacramentum. Tremendous and Life-giving Sacrament, we tremble in Thy Presence, knowing that the Angels also tremble when they approach Thee; we confess our unworthiness, and we implore Thee to have mercy on us.

Panis omnipotentia Dei caro factus. Bread that becomes Flesh by the almighty power of God, transform us who are corrupt, into Thine Incorruptible Body, for we are sinful Flesh; have mercy on us.

Incruentum Sacrificium. Unbloody Sacrifice,

give us courage to shed our blood for Thy glory, and to sacrifice to Thee all that is in us, with entire self-denial; have mercy on us.

Dulcissimum Convivium cui assistunt Angeli. Sweetest Banquet, at which Angels assist as Thy Ministers, we acknowledge ourselves unworthy even to see Thee, much less to partake of Thee. We have not on the wedding garment, and we deserve to be cast into the exterior darkness; have mercy on us.

Sacramentum Pietatis. Sacrament of Piety, give unto us true piety, not of the lips, but of heart, which may separate us from the love of all temporal things; have mercy on us.

Vinculum Charitatis. Bond of Charity, that unitest us to God and to each other, making us one body; have mercy on us.

Offerens et Oblatio. Priest and Victim, we offer ourselves entirely to Thee, and we beseech Thee to offer us to God, with Thee; have mercy on us.

Spiritualis dulcedo in proprio fonte degustata. Spiritual Sweetness, tasted in its proper Source, we renounce all the pleasures of the earth in Thy Presence; have mercy on us.

Refectio animarum sanctarum. Refreshment of holy souls, we suffer with joy, and we bless all the miseries of this life, in the firm hope of the happiness Thou hast promised us. Let us not receive Thee to our condemnation, but to our salvation, and mayest Thou ever behold in us the seeds of immortality.

Viaticum in Domino morientium. Viaticum of those who die in the Lord; in that terrible moment of death, strengthen us to make the great journey to eternity.

Propitius esto, libera nos Domine. Be merciful and deliver us, Lord, Thou Who art the Liberator of captives.

Ab indignâ Corporis et Sanguinis tui susceptione. Deliver us from an unworthy reception of Thy Body, as the greatest evil that can happen to us, for if we receive Thee in a state of sin, we eat and drink our condemnation.

A concupiscentiâ oculorum. Deliver us from the concupiscence of the eyes, by which death would enter our soul like a thief entering by the window. Grant that we may regard the things of this world as of no importance, and give us a holy contempt for them, which will destroy our affection for them.

A superbiâ vitæ. Deliver us from the pride of life, and impressing deeply on us the knowledge of our nothingness, the vanity of earthly grandeur, breed in us a love of contempt and scorn.

Ab omni peccandi occasione. Deliver us from all occasions of sin, remove them from us by Thy holy providence; give us strength to leave those which attract us, and may we seek nothing else but Thy glory and our own salvation.

Per desiderium illud quo hoc Pascha cum discipulis manducare desiderasti. By the ardent longing wherewith Thou didst desire to eat This Pasch with Thy

disciples, deliver us from a desire to eat with sinners the deadly fruits of sin.

Per summam humilitatem quâ discipulorum pedes lavasti. By Thy deep humility in washing the feet of Thy Apostles, give unto us a submissive spirit, by which we may place ourselves beneath all creatures, and may we never trample under foot our inferiors.

Per ardentissimam charitatem quâ hoc divinum Sacramentum instituisti. Through that ardent charity whereby Thou didst institute this Divine Sacrament, take from us all love of the world, and give us perfect love to Thee, and to our neighbour.

Per sanguinem tuum pretiosum quem nobis in altari reliquisti. Through Thy precious Blood, which Thou has left us on our Altars, deliver us from all attachment to flesh and blood, from all unlawful love, and from all that partakes of the spirit of the Old Adam.

Per quinque vulnera hujus corporis sacratissimi quæ pro nobis suscepisti. Through the Five Wounds of Thy Most Holy Body, which Thou didst receive for our salvation, deliver us from the wounds of concupiscence, and from all suggestions of the world and the devil.

Peccatores. We sinners humbly beseech Thee that it may please Thee to hear us.

Ut nobis fidem, reverentiam et devotionem hujus admirabilis sacramenti augere et conservare digneris.

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to preserve and increase our faith, reverence, and devotion towards this Admirable Sacrament, so that we may make reparation, in some degree, for the outrages that are offered to Thee in It, whether by heretics or by Catholics who communicate unworthily; we beseech Thee to hear us.

Ut ad veram peccatorum confessionem nos perducere digneris. We beseech Thee to render us, by a true confession of our sins, and contrition for them, worthy of a frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist, so that this Heavenly Food may give new life to our souls, and that we may commemorate the Death of Jesus Christ, by mortifying all our evil desires.

Ut nos ab omni hæresi, perfidiâ ac cordis cæcitate liberare digneris. We beseech Thee to preserve us from the poison of heresy, and from that hardness of heart which is the severest scourge of Thine anger.

Ut Sanctissimi hujus sacramenti pretiosos et cœlestes fructus nobis impertiri digneris. We beseech Thee to impart to us the precious and Heavenly fruits of this Most Holy Sacrament, and that Thy Bodily Presence in our breasts may be accompanied by Thy Spiritual presence in our souls, which do Thou preserve by Thy holy grace.

Ut in hora mortis nostræ hoc cœlesti Viatico nos confortare et munire digneris. We beseech Thee that at the hour of death, Thou wouldst strengthen

and defend us by this Heavenly Viaticum, so that in that terrible passage we may resist our enemy, who redoubles his efforts either to make us despair, or to lead us to a proud self-confidence. And when our soul, being in natural fear at the separation from the body, requires strength to present herself to Him Who is at once her Judge and Saviour, may she then receive mercy; hear us, we beseech Thee.

Fili Dei, Who willest that we should be partakers of Thy Divine Sonship, and disdainest not to call us brothers, deliver us from the misery natural to the children of Adam.

Agnus Dei, &c., &c. Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, wash away our guilt, and render us worthy to appear before God. Spare us, O Lord.

Agnus Dei, &c., &c. Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, make us to hate sin as the only evil there is on earth. Spare us, O Lord.

Agnus Dei, &c., &c. Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, give us the spirit of true penitence, to blot out those sins we have committed. Give us grace to acknowledge them, to take the part of Thy justice against our own ingratitude, so that not sparing ourselves, we may be able to say to Thee with more confidence: have mercy on us.

PRAYER

IN ADORATION OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

My God and Saviour Jesus, true God and true Man, worthy Victim of the Most High, Living Bread and Source of Eternal Life. I adore Thee with all my heart in Thy Divine Sacrament, with the intention of making reparation for all the irreverence, profanation, and impiety that have been committed against Thee in this dread Mystery. I now bow down before Thy Most Holy Majesty, to adore Thee in the place of those who have never rendered Thee any homage and duty, and who, it may be, will never have the happiness to worship Thee, such as heretics, atheists, blasphemers, Jews, idolaters, and all infidels. I desire, my God, to give Thee as much glory as they would give Thee altogether, were they to offer Thee their respect and gratitude; I desire to unite in my faith, my love, and in the sacrifice of my heart all the honour, love, and glory that they might be capable of rendering unto Thee for ever and ever. I even desire, with all the ardour of my soul, to offer Thee as many blessings and praises as the lost souls utter imprecations against Thee from their place of punishment. To sanctify this adoration and make it more agreeable to Thee, I unite it, O my Lord, to the adorations of Thy Universal Church, in heaven and on earth. Consider the dispositions of

my heart rather than the words of my mouth. I desire to offer in Thy honour, all the spirit of praise that the Holy Ghost has infused into Thy Mother and Thy Saints, and I offer all the praise that Thou shalt address to Thy Eternal Father in this Glorious Sacrament, where Thou art a perpetual Holocaust, and all the honour Thou shalt offer in the bosom of the Father, where he has begotten Thee from all eternity, and where Thou dost render Him infinite praise in the Divine Essence: praised and adored for ever be the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar.

METHOD

FOR ASSISTING AT THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS WITH PROFIT.

Books of piety are filled with methods that are more or less useful for hearing Holy Mass. We can choose one or the other, according to its merits and the advice of our director; what is essential is, to assist at the Divine Sacrifice with a lively faith and an ardent love for the adorable Victim, Who is as truly immolated on our altars as He once was on Calvary.

Saint Leonard of Port Maurice, of the order of St. Francis, is the author of the following method. He was known throughout Italy for his zeal and apostolic labours. He died in 1751, and was

canonized by Pius IX. in 1867. His Feast is kept on the 27th November.

This method being the work of a Saint, there is every reason to believe that particular graces are attached to it. The author had the consolation of reaping abundant fruits in a short space of time. The Sovereign Pontiff, after approving of this method and recommending it to the use of the faithful, has granted three hundred days' indulgence every time it is used, while assisting at the Holy Sacrifice.

The angelical doctor, St. Thomas, tells us that we have all four special debts which we owe to Almighty God, answering to the four great ends for which Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar. These are:

1. To praise and honour the infinite Majesty of God, in acknowledgment of His supreme dominion over us.

2. To satisfy Almighty God for the sins we have committed against Him.

3. To thank Him for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us.

4. To implore His divine grace and assistance.

The method for hearing Mass as here given, is especially conformable to the spirit of the Church, whose wish it is that we should, when assisting at Mass, unite our intention to that of the Priest, who offers up the Holy Sacrifice for the four ends just mentioned; by so doing, we shall be able, accord-

ing to St. Thomas, to pay off, in the most efficacious manner, the four debts which we have contracted with Almighty God.

As soon, therefore, as the Mass commences, while the Priest humbles himself at the foot of the altar and says the *Confiteor*, make a short examination of conscience, an act of true contrition, beg pardon of God for your sins, and invoke the assistance of the Holy Spirit and of the Blessed Virgin that you may hear Mass with all reverence and devotion.

Then divide the Mass into four parts, corresponding to these four obligations, in the following way:—

FROM THE INTROIT TO THE GOSPEL.

1. From the beginning up to the Gospel you will pay your first debt, of honouring and praising the Majesty of God, who is worthy of infinite honour and praise. Humble yourself, therefore with Jesus; acknowledge your own nothingness in the presence of His immense Majesty; and then with great modesty and recollection, with humility of heart and body, say:

"O my God, I adore Thee, I acknowledge Thee to be the Lord and Master of my soul. I protest that all I am, and all I have, is from Thee: and since Thy exceeding Majesty demands an infinite homage and worship, and I, a miserable creature, am utterly unable to acquit myself of this

great debt, I offer Thee the homage and the humiliation which Jesus offers to Thee upon the Altar. Whatsoever Jesus does, that I intend to do likewise, in union with Him. I humble and prostrate myself before Thy Majesty; I adore Thee, in union with the humiliation of Jesus; I rejoice and am full of joy that the blessed Jesus offers up to Thee, for me, an infinite honour and worship."

Close your book and continue to make in your heart several acts of joy at the thought that God is infinitely honoured, and say again and again:

"Yes, my God, I rejoice at the infinite honour which this Holy Sacrifice gives to Thy Majesty; I rejoice at it and am glad, as far as I know how and to the utmost of my power."

Do not care to limit yourself to these words, but follow the promptings of your own devotion, keeping yourself recollected and united to God. Oh, how well in this way, how well will you pay off your first debt!

FROM THE GOSPEL TO THE ELEVATION.

2. In the second part, which is from the Gospel to the Elevation, you will pay off the second debt. Cast a glance upon your many grievous sins, consider the immense debt you have contracted on account of them, with the Divine justice, and say with a humble heart:

"Behold, O my God, the traitor who has so often rebelled against Thee! Alas, with sorrow I

hate and detest, with all the affections of my heart, my most grievous sins; and I offer Thee, in satisfaction for them, the satisfaction which Jesus gives Thee upon the Altar. I offer Thee all the merits of Jesus, the blood of Jesus; Jesus, God and Man, who, as a victim, is sacrificing Himself again for me; since upon that altar Jesus is my Mediator and my Advocate; by His most precious Blood, He is imploring pardon for me. I unite myself to the voice of that loving Blood, and I ask mercy for all my most grievous sins. The Blood of Jesus cries to Thee for mercy. My broken heart also cries to Thee for mercy. Ah, my beloved God, if my tears move Thee not, let the groans of my Jesus move Thee; and that mercy which He obtained for all mankind upon the cross, why should He not obtain it for me upon the Altar? Yes, I hope that, in virtue of that most Precious Blood Thou wilt pardon me all my sins, which I will never cease to lament, even to the last moment of my life."

Close your book, and repeat several times, acts of true interior and earnest contrition. Give vent to your affections in silence, and in the depth of your heart, say to Jesus:

"My beloved Jesus, give me the tears of Peter, the contrition of Magdalene, and the sorrow of those saints who, once sinners, became true penitents, so that, in this Mass, I may obtain the pardon of all *my sins.*"

FROM THE ELEVATION TO THE COMMUNION.

3. In the third part, which is from the Elevation to the Communion, consider the amount of the many and wonderful blessings you have received, in gratitude for which, offer to Almighty God a gift of infinite value, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ; invite all the angels and all the saints to thank Him for you, in this or the like manner:

"Behold me, my most beloved God, laden with blessings, general and particular, which Thou hast bestowed upon me, and which Thou wilt still bestow upon me, in time and in eternity. I acknowledge that Thy mercies towards me have been and are infinite; I am ready to pay Thee for them, even to the last farthing; wherefore, in gratitude and in payment for them, behold this Divine Blood, this most Precious Body, which I present to Thee by the hands of Thy Priest. I know that this offering, which I present to Thee, is sufficient to pay Thee for all the gifts Thou hast bestowed upon me. This gift of infinite value is, of itself, worth all the gifts which I have ever received, or shall ever receive, from Thee. Ye holy angels, and all ye blessed saints of heaven, oh, help me to thank my God, and offer to Him, in thanksgiving for His blessings to me, not only this, but all the Masses which are at this moment celebrated throughout the whole world; so that His most loving beneficence may receive a complete recompense for all the favours which He has shewn me, and which He will confer upon me for ever and ever. Amen."

Oh, how pleased is our good God with such a thanksgiving! Oh, how is He satisfied by this one offering, which, being of an infinite value, is worth more than all other offerings together! And in order to excite yourself the more to this devotion invite the whole court of heaven to thank Him for you; invoke those saints to whom you are more specially devout, and say to them, from the depth of your heart:

"O my beloved saints and advocates, thank the good God for me, that I may not live and die ungrateful; beg of Him to accept my goodwill, and to have regard to the loving thanksgivings which Jesus, in this Mass, is offering to Him for me."

Do not be content with saying this once only, but repeat it again and again; and be assured that in this way, you will completely acquit yourself of this great debt.

FROM THE COMMUNION TO THE END OF MASS.

4. In the fourth part, which is from the Communion to the end of the Mass, after having made a Spiritual Communion while the Priest is communicating sacramentally, consider God to be within you and then open your heart and ask Him for many graces and know that then Jesus unites Himself with you and prays and supplicates for you; therefore, enlarge your heart, and do not ask for trifling things, but ask for great graces; for great is the offering which you make to God of His Divine Son. *Say, then,* with a humble heart:

"My beloved God, I acknowledge myself quite unworthy of Thy favours; I confess my exceeding unworthiness, and that, for my many grievous sins, I do not deserve to be heard by Thee. But how canst Thou refuse to listen to Thy Divine Son, who prays upon the altar for me, and offers Thee His Blood and His Life? Hear, I beseech Thee, my most beloved God, the prayers of this my great Advocate, and for His sake, grant me all the graces Thou knowest to be necessary for me to accomplish the great affair of my eternal salvation. And now I make bold to ask of Thee a general pardon for all my sins, and the grace of final perseverance; moreover, I beg of thee, O my God, trusting in the prayers of my Jesus, all virtues in an heroic degree, and all those efficacious helps which I require to become a saint. I also ask of Thee the conversion of all unbelievers, and of all sinners, and particularly of those who are related to me, either by ties of kindred, or spiritually: I ask of Thee the deliverance, not of one soul only, but of all the souls in purgatory. Bring them all forth, so that by the efficacy of this Divine Sacrifice, that prison of purification may be emptied. Convert all living souls; may this miserable world become a paradise of delights for Thee, in which, having been loved, and reverenced, and praised by all, do Thou bring us at length to praise and bless Thee for all eternity. Amen."

Pray thus for yourself, for your children, friends,

parents, and relations; beg that all your wants, spiritual and temporal, may be supplied. Ask also for the fulness of all blessings upon the Holy Church and for its deliverance from all evils; and offer up your petitions, not with lukewarmness, but with a great confidence, and be assured that your prayers, united to the prayers of Jesus, will assuredly be heard.

As soon as the Mass is over, make an act of thanksgiving to Almighty God, and leave the Church with a heart full of compunction, as if you were coming down from Mount Calvary.

Now I ask you, if you had assisted in this way at all the Masses you have heard up to this time, with what treasures would not your soul have been enriched! Ah! what have you not lost, by assisting at so great a sacrifice with so little piety, looking about you, watching the persons who come in or go out, talking sometimes, and giving way to sleepiness, or, at the best, muttering some prayer without attention and without recollection! From this moment, then, make a resolution to use this easy and simple method for hearing Mass with profit. Be well convinced that, in a little time, your soul will by means of it be enriched with singular graces and blessings; you will conceive daily a higher esteem for the august sacrifice of the Mass, and it will never enter your mind to say, What does it matter if I hear one Mass more or less ! Revolting and scandalous language in the mouth of

a Christian, but, unhappily, too common in the world in which we live.

EXERCISE

DURING THE HOLY MASS IN THE FORM OF A CONVERSATION, THE GREATER PART OF WHICH IS TAKEN FROM THE WORKS OF ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI.

PRAYER BEFORE MASS.

O DIVINE JESUS, Who, as God, art present everywhere, and Who, as Man, art about to be present on the altar, I acknowledge and firmly believe Thy Holy Presence; penetrate my soul with due respect; give me grace to assist worthily at the august sacrifice which Thou art going to make of Thyself for the love of us, to the Divine Majesty.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF MASS TO THE GOSPEL.

O Loving Saviour, Who art about to renew on the altar the same sacrifice that Thou didst offer for us all on the Cross, deign to make me understand and acknowledge all the sufferings that Thy love for me made Thee endure in Thy Passion, and before that in the Garden of Olives. To what a state do I see Thee reduced, Adorable Jesus! With Thy Sacred Face bowed to the ground, Thou didst suffer the three greatest pains of which the soul is capable; fear, sorrow, and weakness. But what is the cause of it? I know, O Lord; it is the sight of the

rigorous justice of Thy Father, Who is going to pursue and punish sin, even to draining the last drop of Thy Blood; it is the sight of the little profit ungrateful men will derive from Thy death; it is the sight of my sins in particular. Ah! it is I who ought rather to be overwhelmed with fear, sadness, and grief, for so many sins, thoughts, words and actions, of which I am guilty, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. I will submit to my punishment, when it pleases Thee to send it me, in expiation of my sins.

But to what an excess dost Thou carry Thy pains, O suffering Jesus! even to falling into mortal agony, and sweating blood so abundantly, as to saturate the ground, without receiving, even from Thy Eternal Father, aught but inflexible rigour. O sin, cursed sin! Thou must be a great evil, since Thou hast caused all these pains to the Great and Holy God! Why cannot I detest it, O my Jesus, and weep for it, like Thee, with the bitterest sorrow, and tears of blood . . .? O Heavenly Father, forgive me, by reason of the painful satisfaction of Thy dear Son. Remember that those cruel pains have made reparation for the criminal pleasures by which I have offended Thee; remember the satisfaction He has obtained Thee by His resignation. . . .

O Jesus, how pleasing is that resignation Thou hast given for my example! Thou askest that the cup of bitterness, shame, and sorrow may pass from Thee, nevertheless, knowing it to be Thy Father's

will that Thou shouldst drink it, Thou submittest Thine own will to His, though Thou knowest Thy submission will lead Thee to the painful Cross. O how well Thou teachest me that every will must bow to that of God! Ah! make me then to understand this truth, and to practise it; let me say, in all my troubles: O my Father, may Thy will, and not mine, be done ! From this moment I submit to all, and especially to this cross Thou hast sent me. * * * *

WHEN THE EPISTLE IS ABOUT TO BE READ.

Already I see Thee going to meet the traitor disciple, to receive his base kiss with gentleness, to give up Thy innocent Body, to be bound by Thy enemies, and allow Thyself to be dragged to Jerusalem, to be overwhelmed there with ignominious insults. O my soul! canst thou really conceive it? The Great God of Heaven, bound with cords by sinful men, whom He made out of nothing. O Jesus! what are their strong cords in comparison to Thy power? Yet it is not their cords, but Thy love that keeps Thee bound, and that drags Thee to death for us.—Oh, what do I not owe Thee in return for it? Grant that love may bind me closely to all Thy holy will.

FROM THE GOSPEL TO THE SANCTUS.

Thy Gospel, in which is deposited the truths of Thy love, teaches me that Thou, O my dearest

Lord, didst desire to suffer at Jerusalem, from all kinds of persons, and all manner of outrages. Whilst the soldiers hurry Thee from one tribunal to another, Thy friends forsake Thee; the most zealous amongst them denies Thee; Thy enemies load Thee with infamous insults; the high priests declare Thee to be a blasphemer; the governor of Judea acknowledges Thy innocence, and yet condemns Thee as a malefactor; the King of Galilee turns Thee into ridicule, and treats Thee like a fool, Thou Who art Eternal Wisdom; the ungrateful people, with furious cries, clamour for Thee to be put to death, and prefer that Barabbas be released, and not Thee. O Divine Benefactor of all men, it is thus Thou art treated by all! How can I, whose sins ought to fill me with confusion, venture to complain? What a deluge of sufferings has burst over Thee, O King of Glory! Cruel blows bruise Thy Sacred Cheeks; Thy Sacred Face is shamefully spit upon; Thy Holy Eyes are insolently blindfolded; frightful blasphemy assails Thine Ears; a crown of thorns pierces Thy Divine Head; barbarous scourging tears Thy Divine Flesh, so that Thy whole Precious Body is one mass of wounds from head to foot, and Thou sufferest all without resistance, and without a murmur. O God of heaven and earth, is it indeed Thou Who willest to be thus abased? Yes, I firmly believe it; I believe it is Thy love which makes Thee endure. But how can I believe it without being myself penetrated with

grief, admiration and love? O hidden God, my King, my Divine Head, I adore Thee, I love Thee with all the strength of my heart!

DURING THE OFFERTORY.

O Heavenly Father, behold Thy dear Son humbled before Thee; we offer Him unto Thee, with all His merits that He has willed to transmit to us, now that He immolates Himself on the Altar. I render homage to Thy Supreme Majesty, by these Divine Mysteries, to acknowledge Thy sovereign dominion over us; I give thanks to Thy infinite goodness, to acknowledge all Thy blessings; I ask of Thy abundant mercy the pardon of all my sins; I ask of Thine Infinite Bounty, all graces necessary for those for whom I ought to pray, particularly for N. N. I deserve nothing for myself but Thy anger, but my Saviour has merited Thy mercy for me. If my sins offend Thee, O let His humiliations appease Thee, since they have made superabundant reparation to Thy outraged glory. Yes, I am not afraid to say, with humble confidence, that, in offering Jesus to Thee, we offer a price infinitely superior to what we can owe to Thee. Grant me then, Lord, in His Name, all that I ask Thee, and especially the grace of

But since Thou, Divine Jesus, willest that I should co-operate in Thy labours for my salvation, I will endeavour to imitate Thy patience, Thy *silence*, Thy meekness, whenever I receive any

wrongs from creatures, and especially Thy example shall be my strength; in the midst of my troubles I will unite myself to Thee, to glorify my God by my submission, since it is by Thee that the Angels and the Heavenly Dominations adore and bless the Divine Majesty by their immortal hymns.

FROM THE SANCTUS TO THE DOMINE NON SUM DIGNUS.

O Jesus, Thou Who art One with the Thrice Holy God, Thou to whom all people cry out: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Thy love, much more than Thy judges, surrendered Thee into the hands of the executioner. Not content with having thus sacrificed Thy Body, Thy honour, Thy reputation, for us, Thou sacrificest Thy life on Calvary. Thou arrivest there exhausted with the weight of Thy Cross; Thou sufferest Thine innocent Body to be fastened to it by sharp nails, which pierced Thy Hands and Feet; whilst being raised from the ground on the Cross, Thou dost permit that the violence of the shock should enlarge Thy Sacred Wounds, and dost suffer Thyself to be insulted afresh by bitterest scorn.

Yet, O God of all holiness, Thou divinely revengest Thyself, by doing good to men; Thou askest pardon for Thy enemies; Thou dost excuse their faults; Thou convertest a thief, and dost promise him Paradise; Thou leavest Thy holy Mother to be a Mother to us all, and still consumed with

thirst for our redemption, Thou dost finish the great work, as Thou committest Thy soul into the hands of Thy Father; at last Thou dost expire, the victim of Thy obedience and of Thy love for us, and Thy pierced Side shows us the Sacred Heart to which we owe all.

TOWARDS THE ELEVATION.

And Thou diest thus, my God, my Benefactor, my true Father, and it is to save me from hell, to procure me heaven, to show Thy love for me, and gain mine to Thyself. Thou, the same Who didst die on Calvary, art really present on the Altar, beneath our very eyes, at so short a distance from us, to renew Thy sacrifice, and ask me for my heart. Oh! I make it over to Thee, my sweet and adorable Redeemer! Would that I had a thousand hearts to give Thee! I adore Thee, I humble myself before Thee, I love Thee, I desire to love Thee as much as Thou art worthy of being loved, I desire to die of sorrow for having lived without loving Thee. . . . O Father of Mercies, look down from heaven on the Adorable Victim Who is immolated here for us; look on His Precious Blood, poured out to the last drop. In His name I again ask pardon and Thy graces, especially the grace of . . . I venture to hope for all, since Thou canst refuse nothing to Thy Beloved Son: it is He who asks for me, it is His Blood that cries out to Thee for pardon. Remember that my soul has

been washed, and, as it were, sealed with It in baptism, and still oftener in the Sacrament of Penance. Can Thy wrath fall on a creature thus covered and defended with that Propitiating Blood . . .?

TOWARDS THE PATER.

I therefore renounce all mistrust, since I have such a powerful Mediator with Thee, O our Heavenly Father; still more do I renounce all sin, and all occasions of sin, seeing that sin is the cause of the death of so loving a Saviour. I renounce even the slightest deliberate fault; I submit to the expiation of them all, in union with my Redeemer, by my entire obedience and resignation to Thy Holy Will; let it reign over me, let it be my food, my strength against all temptations, as in all my trials. And Thou, Divine Lamb, Who hast died to take away the sins of the world, grant me grace to fear and avoid sin, more than all the evils of the world, more than even death itself.

FROM THE DOMINE NON SUM DIGNUS TO THE END.

O most Compassionate Saviour! Who never regardest our unworthiness, but only Thy goodness, in loading us with Thy blessings, what excessive tenderness Thou hast for us! Thy Heart cannot bear to be separated from us, even by death. It caused Thee to institute, on the eve of Thy Passion, this admirable Sacrament, which makes Thee remain with us to the end of the world, and to unite

Thee closely to each of us, in becoming the food of our souls. . . . O most tender of Fathers, nothing costs Thee too much, nothing hinders Thee from showing Thy boundless love towards Thy children. For this end, Thou workest the most astonishing miracles; it would seem as though something were wanting to Thy happiness, if Thou didst not form an intimate union with us. Thou hast employed every method to persuade us to receive Thee; Thou dost invite us all to Thee, even the most wretched, with abundant promises of consolation; Thou dost offer, if we receive Thee, the sublime favour of dwelling in us, and uniting us to Thee; Thou assurest us that Thy delight is to be with the children of men, and that Thou hast the greatest desire to fill them with Thy graces.

How then, Divine Lover of souls, could I possibly not desire to receive Thee, after Thy loving persuasion to do so? Oh! I desire it with all my heart. Why am I not fortunate enough to possess Thee really in the depths of my being, so that I may converse with Thee, as heart speaks to heart? I detest for ever all the sins which make me unworthy of it. I will prepare to approach Thee as soon as possible, and as often as I can. Take away from me that sloth which makes me delay to receive Thee, and which the displeasure of the Church urges me to lay aside.

Oh! when wilt Thou attach me entirely to Thyself in this Sacrament of Love? When shall I love Thee as Thou hast loved me? I purpose daily to

begin, but still I have not yet commenced. O, let it then be to-day—once for all; let me love Thee not only with a firm and effectual love, but with tenderness and fervour, such as Thou hast shown for me. Grant that I may love Thee more than a friend, and more than a brother or a spouse. Where shall I find a friend, brother, father, or spouse, who loves me as much as Thou hast done, Thou, my Creator, my Redeemer, and my God? Thou, who hast given me all things, Thy precepts to instruct me, Thy example to encourage me, Thy merits to enrich me, Thy Blood to redeem me, Thy Body to feed me, Thy Heart to love me; Thou, who wishest to be my consolation on earth, and my happiness in heaven! Ah! I may well say with one of Thy servants: O, too loving Jesus, Thou art quite exhausted to supply my wants and my comforts; what more couldst Thou have done for me, Thy creature, even had I been Thy God, and Thou my slave? Oh! I will love Thee with all the strength of my heart; help me to love Thee more and more; I ask for nothing beyond that, for it is the greatest of all blessings. O God of mercy, give me Thy love!

AT THE END OF MASS.

I bless Thee, Word made Flesh, for the august Sacrifice Thou hast just renewed for us; grant that I may carefully preserve its precious fruits, by ear-

nestly avoiding all sin, by faithfully performing all my duties, and suffering all my troubles patiently, since these are the signs of true love.

ACT OF REPARATION.

O DIVINE Lord, Who from the great love Thou bearest to mankind, dost dwell in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, where instead of the reverence and adoration due to Thee, Thou dost frequently receive only indifference, contempt and insult; I cast myself at Thy feet and offer reparation for all that Thou hast suffered, and dost suffer daily in this Adorable Mystery.

First, I offer Thee reparation for all the irreverence that I myself have committed in Thy Presence, for all the scandal I have given, and for the little devotion I have shewn to Thee in this Most Holy Sacrament.

Secondly,—I offer Thee reparation for all the contempt and insult Thou hast suffered in This Sacrament, since Its first institution, and for all that may be offered Thee in future ages.

Prostrate at Thy Feet, I most humbly ask Thy pardon, and acknowledge that Thou art worthy of all praise and glory; I acknowledge that Thou, hidden in This Sacrament, art the King of Heaven and earth; I offer Thee my homage and adoration, and I consecrate myself to Thee, desiring to adore

ee wherever Thou dost reside sacramentally
ɔughout the world, and uniting myself to the
:ship offered Thee by all creatures, throughout
rnity. To the Lamb which was slain for us, be
ry, honour, praise, might and blessing, for ever
l ever. Amen.

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